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No. 154.

KISSING ON THE SLY.

BY ARNOLD ISLER.

Waste as you will your hours of leisure,
You young folks, low and high,
No doubt you all have some sweet pleasure,
Or when you do rely—
But there is nothing half so pleasant—
That is to Jane and I—
When we know there is no one present,
As "kissing on the sly."
Now, Jane's mother does not believe in
This "kissing on the sly."
She thinks you women are so deceiving,
Girls used to be so shy,
But Jane, like me, can't see the harm in
(When no one else is nigh),
Kissing, oh! it is so charming,
This "kissing on the sly."
Sides, Jane and I have many reasons
For "kissing on the sly."
"Tis just as good as in the seasons,
But when we do it, we'll still be
It don't play out like other pleasures,
Nor need we to apply
To any keen and severe measures,
For "kissing on the sly."
When Jane's mother is down the cellar,
And no one else is nigh,
Jane looks round by her fellow,
Meantime, "How is this for high?"
While I, you see, draw somewhat nearer
To this young maid so shy,
For well I know that naught can cheer her,
Like "kissing on the sly."
Time passes fast; Jane and I soon will be
Tied together by the tie
Called the wedded tie, but we'll still be
Inseparably Jane and I.
And though some of life's joys may perish
As the years go gliding by,
Yet there is one we'll ever cherish—
"Tis "kissing on the sly."

Rocky Mountain Rob, THE CALIFORNIA OUTLAW; OR, The Vigilantes of Humbug Bar.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF THE "WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND
KIT," "RED MAZEPPA," "ACE OF SPADES,"
"HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF
NEW YORK," "A STRANGE
GIRL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

JIM'S WOONING.

BESSIE's heart beat fast, and the hot blood came surging to her cheeks, as she felt the slight pressure of York's arm around her waist, and his warm breath fanned her cheek. The girl would freely have given almost any thing that she possessed to have been well out of the scrape; but, retreat now was impossible. She had courted the question and must answer it. York was not a man to be trifled with.

"Come, Bessie; I've asked you a question; arn't you going to answer it?" he said, in his low, deep voice.

"A question, Jim?" she murmured, in confusion.

"Yes; you know well enough what I mean. Don't pretend to misunderstand me; you're too smart a girl to try that dodge. Give me a straight answer. Don't play with me. Folks say, Bessie, that I am not the kind of a man that a wise head would take for a plaything. It would be like playing with edged tools; handle carefully, or there might be cut fingers round the board."

"But, Jim, I don't know much about you," the girl stammered.

"Well, I don't know much about you, either," he coolly rejoined. "So we are even there; but, for my part, I'm willing to go it blind. I don't think that if your worthy father, old Pop Shook, asked for a certificate of character from my Sunday-school teacher, I could give it to him. I couldn't even produce the register of baptism to prove that my name is really Jim York; but, I can put down ounces of gold-dust with any two-legged critter from here to Bannock city. What my past life has been is nobody's business. In this region we don't question a man's past life. If he calls himself John Smith, John Smith he is without question. I own two-thirds of the Waste-water Gulch strike, as rich a 'lead' as there is north of Bannock, and I don't take a back seat for a man in the Humbug valley. I love you, Bess, and I want you. I ain't a man that gives way much to sentiment; 'ain't in my nature. I've dealt the cards just as coolly when all my pile was up as when I was playing for a broken-down mule. I am not generally blind, either, and I've had some little experience with women in the old time, before I emigrated for my country's good, and wore store-clothes and a biled shirt on Broadway. You have acted as if you cared something for me, and wanted me to know it. Now, Bess, spit it out; don't dodge the question; are you mine, or have I jumped another man's claim?"

The cheeks of the girl glowed like a furnace, and her breath came thick and fast. Despite the matter-of-fact tone of York and his careless words, there was an undercurrent of passion perceptible that frightened the girl. The volcano was crested over by the lava coat, but the fires still burned fiercely beneath. She feared to rouse the volcano's might.

"Well, Jim, I didn't expect this," she murmured.

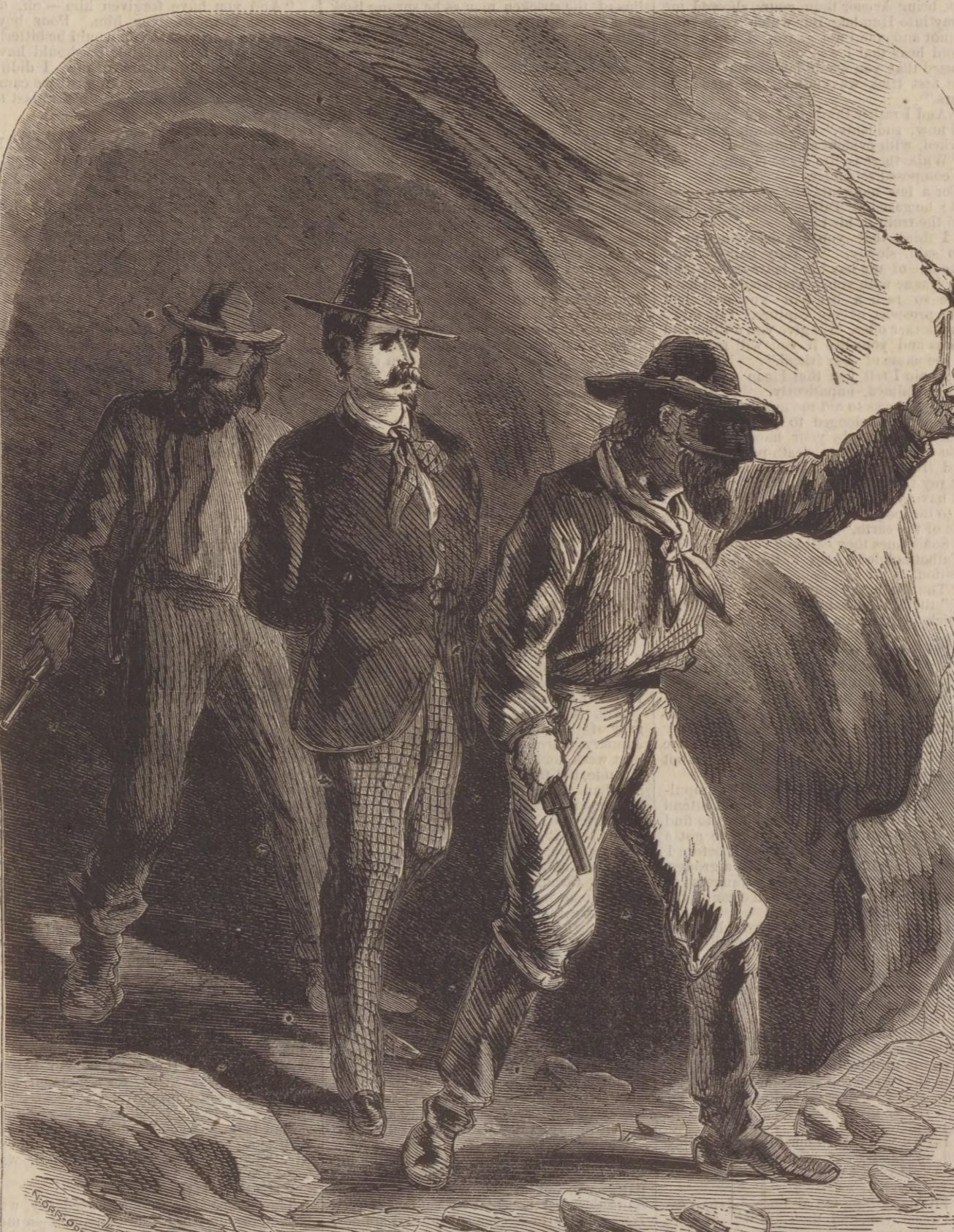
"Oh, you didn't?"

It was only a simple sentence, but the intonation gave the lie to the girl as directly as though it had been framed in words.

"I mean that I didn't expect it so soon," she stammered, in confusion.

"Oh!"

The little exclamation was given with so



Through a narrow winding passage, a natural gallery in the rock, the three proceeded.

much contempt that it wounded the girl more deeply than a torrent of bitter words would have done.

"Now, don't be angry with me, Jim," she said, imploringly, and the red cheeks grew pale, while an anxious expression appeared upon her face.

"Why, Jim, how you talk!" she murmured. She was fascinated despite herself. It was the charm of the serpent that binds the bird. Over her senses crept a strange lethargic feeling; her breath came short and fast; her bosom rose and fell tumultuously; her face burned and her heart beat; like one in a dream, she permitted York to wind his arms around and draw her tightly to his breast; kiss after kiss he pressed upon her soft lips, still she resisted not. She was under a spell. The dominant nature had triumphed over the weaker one.

"You are mine!" he muttered, in triumph. "I press my seal of love upon your lips, and I defy man or devil to tear you from me."

"Because I'd send him to eat his hash where he wouldn't need a fire to keep him warm!" York said, with savage earnestness. The girl grew paler still.

"But, Jim, I don't love any one at all."

"It's well that you don't," York said, meaningly. "Now, Bess, I like you, with all your nonsense, and I've made up my mind to have you. I feel pretty sure that you like me now better than any one else, and when you do make up your mind to it, you'll love me. You can't fool with me as you have with the soft-heads that you've made game of ever since you came to the Bar. You've tried once too often, and this time your 'hand' ain't worth much, and I'm going to rake in the stakes myself. I'll treat you like a lady, dress you up like a princess, and maybe, some day, I'll take you East, and let you shine in the New York palaces. Diamonds won't look bad in your golden hair, my pet, and you shall have 'em, big enough, too, to make the New York 'sharps' turn pale with envy. I've got the 'open sesame' that shall split the rock, society, and give us entrance.

My gold-dust will blind 'em. Why, gold will buy every thing in New York, from the judge on the bench down to the boot-black."

The girl was startled by the fiery energy of York's words; here was a new phase of the gambler's character.

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"I press my seal of love upon your lips, and I defy man or devil to tear you from me."

Her senses reeling with strange passions, her head sunk down upon his shoulder; she was almost helpless, weak as a child.

Long and lovingly York looked upon the fair face nestled on his shoulder. The better angel of the man seemed to have taken possession of him, and the dark-winged messengers of fraud and rapine were for the time forced to fly.

One little glimpse of clear sunlight amid the clouded sky of Jim York's lawless life.

Then into that little dining-room, putting to flight the angels of peace and love, and bringing wrath and discord, came old Pop Shook.

Old Pop's naturally red face grew redder still when he beheld his treasure in the arms of Jim York, the gambler. He uttered an oath, which made it plainly evident that the host of the Waterproof saloon was fearfully excited.

With a slight scream, Bessie essayed to escape from the embrace of York, but, with a strong arm, he restrained her, and looked with calmness into the face of the angry father.

"Look a-here, York, what does this mean?" the old man cried, unable to keep still, and dancing about like a turkey on a hot plate.

"Well, Pop, I should think the position that your daughter occupies just now wouldn't call for much explanation."

"What have you been saying to my gal?"

"Just what you said to her mother a good many years ago," York replied, coolly.

"What!" the old man fairly screamed; "and, Bess, do you love this fellow—this gambler—this rascal!"

"Hold on!" York cried, quickly, in his clear, cold tones; "don't call names. It ain't for me to quarrel with you just now.

As for my character, I guess it's about as good as any other man's in these diggings; and if it ain't, I'll just strike a new 'lead' an' make it as good. I love this girl, and I care more for me than she does for one else. I'm going to have her, with your consent, I hope, but have her anyway, if she's willing, if every man for forty miles around said no. That's my hand, Pop, and I always play my cards for all they're worth. Just talk this matter over and I'll see you again."

Then York released the girl and quitted the house, leaving old Shook in speechless amazement.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PRICE OF A WHITE SQUAW.

For full five minutes the old man glared around him, his mouth open and his face scarlet, while Bessie stood trembling before him; but, at last, he found his tongue.

"Bessie, I'd rather see you laid out in your grave-clothes than to see you the wife of that rascal!" he cried.

"Oh, father, don't be angry with me!" she exclaimed, her eyes full of tears; then she sunk down in a chair and began to sob as her heart would break.

"Why, Bess, how can you think of this fellow for a min'e?" the old man asked, his anger cooling down at the sight of her grief.

"Oh, I don't know!" she moaned, between her sobs.

"Why, gal, he's a disgrace to the Bar; a cool, clear-headed scoundrel. Thar ain't an honest man in the Humbug valley that likes him. He ain't got no friends; he's only a card-sharp at the best."

"He owns the Waste-water gulch mine," protested the girl.

"Well, I don't dispute that; he's got two partners, Kangaroo and Bill Rackensack though; they run the mine; he don't sile his dainty white hands much; he'd rather sleep all day and gamble all night."

"But, Doc Kidder gambles too," Bessie persisted. She knew that Kidder was a particular friend of her father.

"Yes, but he ain't like York; he's a gentleman, he is. He couldn't run a mine if he wanted to; his health ain't good. But he's a good squar' man. He don't cheat and he plays a fair game. He don't ring any greeny into a little game, and then raise him for all he's worth. He don't play keerds with a revolver on the table and another one in his lap. Why, gal, ef the Vigilantes ever get started in this hyer town, they'll string up that Jim York and his gang just as sure as the Wisdom runs into the Missouri."

"I know that people don't like him," she confessed, drying her eyes on her apron.

"And that's the reason that you do; that's a woman all over. Your mother couldn't bar the sight of me till her old man said that she shouldn't have me and drove me out of the house with a hose-whip; and arter that time she made up her mind to have me anyway, just to spite him. Now, I ain't a-going to be as big a fool as he was. You kin have the man ef you want to; you've got to live with him, not me. But, ef you do have him, just make him pull up stakes and git, 'cos I should hate to have to string him up to a pine tree with the warning of the Vigilantes pinned onto his breast."

"Why, father, I haven't married him, yet."

"Well, you'd better, 'fore long, or there'll be some nice stories 'round about you. S'pose anybody else had come in and caught you a-hugging of him."

"Why, father, I wasn't!"

"Well, he was you; same thing; 'ain't much difference." Old Pop was getting bitter. "You kin do just as you please; I ain't a-going to lift a finger to stop you. I know that I couldn't ef I wanted to, and I ain't a-going to try. Just go your own gait, but don't say that I didn't tell you, ef you marry him and wake up some fine morning and find your husband swinging with a rope round his neck from a pine tree with the warning of the Vigilantes pinned onto his breast."

The girl shuddered at the thought.

"I won't have any thing more to say to him, father." She spoke with spirit and firmness.

"That's right," the father said, approvingly. "Thar ain't any good in that cuss, and the sooner he gets out of the valley the better it will be for the Bar. We've got altogether too many scamps here now. A man with two ounces of gold-dust ain't safe arter dark any more. I reckon that the Vigilantes will call on Judge Lynch to take a hand in the game and purify this town afore long if things get much worse than they are now."

"Do you think that a Vigilance Committee will be got up, father?"

"Just as sure as shootin', gal," he replied, decidedly. "Things can't go on this way much longer. Poor Jimmy Collins was killed last night; just knocked on the head for the sake of the few ounces of dust that he had with him, and one of the 'Johns' up near the Chinese camp was shot dead not a hundred paces from the main trail down the Wisdom."

"Perhaps 'twas Rocky Mountain Rob's road-agents that did it?" suggested Bess.

"Tain't likely; they go for the coaches and the express stuff—don't trouble the mines much; ef they did, it wouldn't be long before we'd make the country too hot to hold 'em. Ef the Vigilantes do get their hands in them they may clean out these fellows up in the mountains too."

"Oh, my!" and the girl sprung suddenly to her feet, "I'm letting those eggs be cooked all to rags!" and she proceeded to remove them from the fire.

"Who did you cook those for?"

"Jim York," she replied.

"Well, put 'em away and keep 'em; somebody may come in and want 'em," said the provident Shook.

"Big Injin eat eggs," said a guttural voice from the doorway.

Old Shook and the girl turned and beheld the Indian chief, known as Mud Turtle, standing in the passage. He was wrapped to the chin as usual in his dirty red blanket.

The Indian was no stranger to either father or daughter, for during the last few days he had been a constant patron of the Waterproof saloon. His visits, though, had been more frequent at the bar, where the fragrant fire-water was dispensed, than to the eating department of Bob Shook's hotel.

"Want something to eat, I s'pose, chief?" Shook asked.

"Ugh! Pale-face barefooted on top of his head, speaks straight. Big chief—Mud Turtle—eat heap now, pretty soon, bimeby."

"Sit down in the other room, Injin; I reckon you kin pay for what you want?" Shook's motto was, no trust.

"Chief no pay, no eat," the Indian observed, with dignity.

"That's correct! Bess, just fix something for the Injun."

The chief stalked into the dining-room and sat down at one of the little tables; shoes followed, while Bessie prepared the ham and eggs.

The Indian looked at Shook stolidly but so steadily that the old man's attention was arrested and he guessed that the Indian wished to speak to him.

So when Bessie brought in the ham and eggs, and placed them on the table, Old Shook drew a chair up and sat down opposite to the Indian, as Bessie retired to the kitchen.

The chief surveyed the eatables, gave a grunt of satisfaction and proceeded to dispatch them. Then, his hunger satisfied, he wiped his mouth on his blanket, leaned over the table and laid his finger impressively on Shook's arm.

"Me, Mud Turtle in pale-face camp—drink fire-water—sleep anywhere—play poker—more white man than Injun."

"Yes," Shook assented.

"When chief goes north he wakes up; his tribe call him O-wa-he; he lead the Blackfoot braves on the war-path, and the scalps of the Crows hang thick in his wigwam."

"Is that so, chief?" Old Pop wondered what the savage was driving at.

"Mud Turtle—white Injun—is a skunk who drinks fire-water and lies. O-wa-he, Blackfoot chief, would not lie to save his life. His barefooted-on-top-of-head father has pretty squaw—the chief's lodge by the great river far off is cold—the chief wants squaw with eyes like sky."

To say that the old tavern-keeper was astounded would be but to faintly express it.

"What! give my gal to you?" he exclaimed, breathlessly and with open mouth, half-rising to his feet.

"No give; chief buy squaw," the Blackfoot replied, with dignity; "give white father one pony, two squaws, bag gold-dust," and the savage produced a buck-skin bag holding perhaps half a pound of dust, and opening it, exposed the yellow grains to the gaze of the old man, whose first impulse was to get angry, but a single glance at the face of his guest convinced him that the chief was in sober earnest and was conscious of no wrong in offering to buy the white maiden.

Then the ridiculousness of the offer struck him and he roared with laughter, somewhat to the Indian's amazement. He watched Old Pop's face very narrowly, mentally calculating if he had bid high enough for the white squaw.

CHAPTER IX.

THE OUTLAWS "AT HOME."

ONWARD through the narrow passage for a hundred yards or more went Talbot and his captors; then suddenly came a halt. The bandage was removed and Talbot looked around him, to see, as he had guessed, that he was in the cavern of the outlaw. The report then was true which said that the road-agents had a treasure-house in the mountains which served also as a refuge from pursuit in time of danger.

It was a natural cavern, lit up now by tallow candles stuck round upon the rocks, and no crevices appeared in the roof through which the daylight might penetrate. All was black as ink, except where the flickering light of the sputtering candles flared out from the rocky walls.

The chamber in which he was now (for Talbot guessed at once that the cavern branched here and there through the rock, as is common with such freaks of the earthquake's giant force) was some thirty feet long by twenty wide. At its further end rose some rock, pulpit fashion, over which that a buffalo-robe was spread, and on the robe sat a dark-bearded man, armed to the teeth, and clad in the wild garb of the mountains, wearing a black half-mask, through which shone glittering eyes.

From the description which he had heard given of the man, Talbot at once recognized Rocky Mountain Rob, the merciless outlaw.

By Talbot's side were two of the bearded men who had aided in his capture. The upper parts of their faces were also concealed by black masks like the one worn by their leader.

Their prisoner took in the situation at a glance. He was helpless in the hands of those who had every reason to take his life and none to spare it. But he wondered why he had not been stricken to death in the mountain gorges—why had all this trouble been taken to bring him a prisoner to that stronghold?

"Here we are, captain, with our bird," said one of the ruffians by Dick's side. He spoke in a hoarse voice, evidently disguised.

The person seated upon the buffalo-robe nodded and seemed for a few minutes to be engaged in surveying Dick; then at last he spoke.

"You are Dick Talbot, the sport from Bannock?" the masked man said, in a low voice, evidently disguised.

"Yes," Dick replied, with his usual confident air. "I'm that very individual."

The moment the outlaw spoke, Dick became certain that he had heard the voice before.

"You made a rather foolish bet in Bannock city, the other day, if I have been rightly informed," the outlaw continued.

"I have made quite a number of foolish bets in my time," was Talbot's careless reply.

"But none as foolish as this one, or you would not be here now to say so. You bet a thousand dollars that you would bring the road-agent, Rocky Mountain Rob, alive or dead, into Bannock city, did you not?"

"Just what I did say."

"It was a stupid thing not only to put up a thousand dollars against an equal sum, but to throw in the chance of losing your own life. You have already lost; and now I suppose you are wondering why I have taken the trouble to bring you here, instead of having you killed at once the moment you fell into my hands?"

"Yes; that circumstance has puzzled me," Dick replied.

"I will explain to you my reason. When you made your bet, one of my agents stood by your side, and the bet was hardly offered and taken before another agent, mounted on a fast horse, was riding like the wind northward to bring me the news; and from the time that messenger reached me until your capture to-night, not a coach has rolled northward from Bannock city, not a 'pilgrim' has trod a trail leading to the Humbug Valley, but my scouts have seen and reported. You came in no coach to Humbug Bar, nor by any foot-path known

to man. Now, tell me, how the deuce did you get into the town without my knowledge?"

"Perhaps some one of your spies has betrayed you?" Talbot suggested.

The teeth of the outlaw came down tightly together.

"By the Eternal! I'd cut his heart out if I could discover who it was that had played me false!" Rob cried, fiercely. "I've had a man night and day on every mountain trail, in every gulch leading into the Bar. A full description of every man, woman and child has been brought to me. Now then, I want to know what hound has betrayed me. Tell me his name; give me your oath to trouble yourself no more about Rocky Mountain Rob or his affairs, and I will let you go free."

Talbot shook his head.

"What?" cried the road-agent, in a tone of menace, "do you refuse my offer?"

"I regret that I can not accept it," was Dick's reply. He certainly was not in the least agitated by the threatening manner of the outlaw.

"You won't live to see it, anyway!" the road-agent retorted.

"I'll take you five to one on that too!" Talbot cried, quickly, the ruling passion of the gamester strong even in that hour of peril.

"Come; get in your hole; you've talked long enough," the second outlaw said, roughly, and he took the candle from the other, and stooping down, entered the cavity.

Then upon the heavy air of the cave came a startling sound, familiar to every mountaineer.

"Twas the warning "whir" of the rattle-snake!

A single exclamation burst from the lips of the stricken man as he sprang back from the reptile, writhing with fear and pain.

The outlaw had stepped directly upon the reptile, coiled asleep within the rocky passage, among the whitening bones of the man who had perished within that dark cell.

The candle, falling from the hands of the road-agent, was extinguished in an instant.

A moment, Talbot and his guard remained motionless, in the dense gloom, transfixed with horror. Then again came the fearful warning of the deadly serpent, which now had glided from the cavity.

With a yell of terror, both of the outlaws fled, unmindful of the prisoner, thinking only of escaping from the terrible reptile, which they could not see in the darkness.

Talbot could hear the outlaws stumbling over the rocks in their backward flight. A moment only he remained motionless. Surrounding by the dense darkness, he remembered the passage in the rock by the side of the cavity. Might it not be to him an avenue of escape?

(To be continued—commenced in No. 152.)

"Then you can judge how you will feel when you find the noose around your neck, and the Vigilantes swing you up to the branch of a tall pine tree," said Dick, with a smile.

"The Vigilantes will never get hold of me," protested the ruffian, sullenly, evidently startled by the suggestion.

"I'll bet you five to one you swing before you're six months older," Dick replied, confidently.

"You won't live to see it, anyway!" the road-agent retorted.

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"I suppose not." That steady gaze fixed on the girl's face—strange, warning.

"You are not very angry, are you?" pleaded Isola, timidly. "I shall love you for his sake, and you—won't you love me a little?"

"Mothers are apt to have some affection for their children," answered the visitor, coldly. Isola looked at her, frightened and wondering.

"I am afraid we have distressed you very much," said she, in a quivering voice, ready tears springing into the big, wistful blue eyes. "Louis told me you wanted him to marry some rich young lady. I don't wonder that you are disappointed, for I haven't any thing but my love for him. I couldn't help him any thing, and, oh, dear madame, love is better than riches, surely. It wasn't so very wrong, was it, when we were so happy?"

"Wrong!" The woman in her rich dress and costly furs, with that resolute, unswerving cruelty in her hard face, rose up like a tower of wrath before the trembling girl. "Wrong!" Such a wicked, grievous wrong that you will not know peace to your dying day. Such a sinful wrong that life will be a burden, and death when it comes a创造. Girl, girl! you had better be dead than what you are."

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"Wrong!" The woman in her rich dress and costly furs, with that resolute, unswerving cruelty in her hard face, rose up like a tower of wrath before the trembling girl. "Wrong!" Such a wicked, grievous wrong that you will not know peace to your dying day. Such a sinful wrong that life will be a burden, and death when it comes a创造. Girl, girl! you had better be dead than what you are."

"I suppose not." That steady gaze fixed on the girl's face—strange, warning.

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cushioned chair, and then the glowing tip died out into white ashes as he lost himself in a reverie. He started presently, laughed to himself, and delighted it.

"How nervous and absent-minded I am! Surely she will be here to-day—dear little Isola! She's roused up more good in me than I thought native to the soil in this year past. I couldn't go wrong and look into those big, clear blue eyes of hers without flinching, and she never found fault with the worst of the peccadilloes I could bring myself to confess to her. I'll just make a clean breast of this last affair—my getting in with the old crowd and going on a drunken spree afterward. She'll be so gentle, sorry to that it will help to put down the temptation another time. The whole world is not so bad, after all. There's my mother, now—I always thought Nature forgot to insert a heart in her makeup, and here she is bringing me about in the most considerate manner, herself going down after Isola and insisting upon me nursing myself into good condition, that she may not be shocked at the change. Then there's Marquestone, who got me into some of my worst scrapes—I'll do him the justice to say he always pulled me through—shows that he has a soft spot in his heart, and plans for me as generously as though he were in love himself. I shouldn't much wonder if he were, by Jove! and it's that which changes him. Odd, isn't it, what a power the gentle passion exerts over us? I, so hot-headed, ambitious, reckless, find myself gentle as a lamb—blessings on the little wife that's done it! It seems like a dream, too good to be true; I'd as soon shuffle off the coils as to wake from it, I think. It's a dear old world, after all's said."

He flung the unconsumed half of his cigar upon the coals, and with his fingers drummed the devil's tattoo upon the stand. There was a rustle without and a tap at his door.

"Come in!" he called. Then sprung up with an eagerly-expectant look. It died out as his mother entered alone, closing the door after her.

"I hoped Isola might be with you," said he, placing a chair for her and resuming his own. "Unwarrantable and selfish, I suppose, but I'm thinking it very long to see the dear little girl. Where is she? At your house, I suppose, you dearest and kindest of mothers. To think I never appreciated you before! I'll make it up by being the most dutiful of sons hereafter. I suppose I'll have to be content with divided affection after this—Florien and Isola were inseparables at school. It will be a happy reunion for my little girlie. Even I could never quite console her for the loss of her girl-friend. How is she, mother?—she was ailing when I left her. Is she well—quite well?"

His mother had her face turned from him, looking stolidly into the grate.

"Let me thaw out, Louis. It's cold—frightfully cold. You seem comfortable here."

"Thanks to you. I'm afraid I've been an ungrateful boy to you, but that's all changed now, isn't it, mother mine?"

She glanced at his bright, hopeful face, and for the first time he saw that she did not reflect his enthusiasm.

"You do look cold, and you've been on the go until you're tired out. Let me order something for you—wine?"

"No, nothing. You've got to bear a disappointment, Louis."

"What! didn't you bring her? Is she sick, poor little wifey? Speak, mother; I shall go to her at once."

"You will never go to her on this earth."

"What do you mean? what have you done, woman? You have not harmed her! By heaven! it would be an evil day any one injured Isola."

"Be quiet, Louis. The girl ran away from the fisherman's hut unknown to any one, and in the dead of night."

"Then it was you did it—you drove her to it! What devil's story have you been hatching up for her?"

His eyes were blazing, his face pale with indignation.

"Nothing but the truth. She was traced to the shore and there the track stopped. I—think—the girl—made way with her self, Louis."

She spoke slowly, watching the effect of her words. A change came over his face—a startled, awed look.

"Dead! You don't mean that? Don't tell me that she's dead."

"It would be better for you if she were."

"You lie!" He turned upon her fiercely.

"Tell me at once what have you said, what have you done to Isola? Fool! that I ever believed in you. It will be a sorry day's work for you unless you right all the wrong you've done, if any."

"It is bad taste to address a lady in that manner, Louis. Undutiful, too. I didn't send her there, if your angel has gone to her proper sphere. I have full as much reason to be affected by her disappearance as you."

"Yes, you have. I shall hold you accountable whatever has occurred. You shall pay doubly, madame, for all you make her suffer."

"She was more filial," sneered Mrs. Redesdale. "But, then, women plead, not threaten. Let me beg of you to sit down again. You discompose me with those violent manifestations."

"Good God! Does the woman expect me to sit and simper and sugar-coat my questions after what she has told me? Speak, if you will; keep silent if you wish. I will not remain in suspense."

"My dear Louis, have patience. You shall have the revelation in good time—immediately if you insist. You were so unfortunate as to run away with and marry your own sister. I wonder you didn't recognize her by the semblance she bears her father. However that may be, I told her simply the truth—"

"What—what is it you say?"

"The girl is your sister."

"It is false—I never had a sister."

"To your knowledge, perhaps. It is unfortunately true. You ran away, if you remember, during the first year after my marriage with Mr. Kenyon. You were gone for months, and in that time the girl was born. I didn't wish to be hampered with the child, so I sent her to the Foundling Hospital, and went on a little tour I had been planning. It was easy enough on my return to let it be understood that the babe had gone to glory on the way."

"Are you a woman, or a demon, that you have no more soul than that? You could not desert your own babe in that cold-blooded way. It is a base lie trumped up to deceive us both."

"It is truth," she answered, doggedly.

"For the rest you should be able to judge. You know what an affectionate mother I was, and what assiduous care I bestowed upon you in tender years. But, then, I loved your father, and I hated hers; that made a difference."

He threw himself into a chair and dropped his face in his hands.

"Heaven knows, you are capable of any thing cruel or bad. Oh, Isola! my poor little Isola!"

"Your sister—remember!"

He flung back his head, with an expression of indescribable loathing on his face.

"Go! before I am tempted to murder you!" he cried, hoarsely. "I could do it with a little compunction as I would crush a venomous snake. It would be better for the world if I was to strike you dead where you stand."

She threw back a taunting laugh as she moved toward the door.

"How blessed I am in my children! Don't murder me, Louis; it would make you such a notorious monster, you know. Murderer of his mother, and—"

"Stop!" he thundered. "One word to sulley her memory, and your life shall pay the forfeit."

Bold as she was, for her very life she dared not utter the scathing words which trembled upon her tongue. She vanished through the closing door, and Louis Kenyon was alone with his despair.

Colonel Marquestone and Mr. Kenyon, the servant announced, flinging back the door.

It was a week after that interview between Louis and his mother. A week during which he had alternately striven to fight off the conviction that she had spoken truth, and cursing himself that he had not suspected it from Isola's temping resemblance to his mother's second husband, Alec Kenyon. And Isola was dead!—little Isola who had loved him so! The blow had broken her heart, and it had sent him back to dreamer depths than any from which her love had rescued him. He had been a young man of generous impulses and weak practices of bad examples; now, all that had inclined to evil in him seemed to have died with her. He never doubted that she was lying at the bottom of the sea, the white hands which had smoothed his hair tangled about with loathsome weeds and slimy reptiles, the blue eyes staring sightlessly under the cold, green waters, which sung their requiem about her awesome last resting-place.

The wonder was that he had not plunged in a mad round of dissipation to deaden his anguish—he probably would have done so, but Colonel Marquestone seldom left his side during these days, and he wielded a stronger influence than the young man himself suspected. Ready for any thing to blunt his acute suffering, Louis was not hard to lead in the very course they had planned for him.

"At last," said Mrs. Redesdale, with a bright smile of welcome. "What a stranger you are making of yourself, colonel—the first call in a week. How you gentlemen of leisure let us lonely women slip out of your minds. Mr. Kenyon, it is a pleasure to see you among us. Florien, my daughter, Miss Redesdale. What! old friends? I was not aware of it. Mr. Kenyon is the celebrated young artist I have engaged to paint your portrait, Florien. My dear sir, you must let me have my own way and prosecute the work here in the house. There is an upper chamber which will suit admirably as a studio, and its arrangements shall be made at your dictation."

"You are very kind, madame. I shall be most happy to defer to Miss Redesdale's convenience."

Do his best he could not make his words more than very coldly courteous. The remembrance of her heartlessness, which had resulted so fatally for himself and the fair young girl he had taken for his wife, was ever present with him as a dull rage which smoldered under his smiling civility. It might not always remain so—the sullen flame might burst all bounds some day with terrible consuming power.

"You do not confine yourself wholly to landscape painting, then?" remarked Florien.

"I devote myself to the study of all that is natural and beautiful, Miss Redesdale. To be candid, the execution of portraits is best paying. Genius is one thing, a shabby coat quite another, and for my part I don't take to shabby coats. Are you really enjoying the hollow deceits?" this world is all a fleeting show, you know. Isn't it pleasant to make such a gilded show of it as you are able to do? Ah, you know nothing of the misery entailed in the compulsory wearing of a shabby coat; that unenviable fate is reserved for us poor devils who have brains instead of purses. The two don't often hunt in couples, I'm sorry to say."

"Haven't you been growing cynical, Mr. Kenyon?"

"Perhaps—very likely, I think. We're apt to wear off the fine edges in a rough rub with the odds of circumstances. You must let me take you to our Art Gallery, Miss Redesdale. I have a picture on exhibition; just a bit of Hudson scenery by moonlight, but it's rather well done, I flatter myself."

"Good God! Does the woman expect me to sit and simper and sugar-coat my questions after what she has told me? Speak, if you will; keep silent if you wish. I will not remain in suspense."

"My dear Louis, have patience. You shall have the revelation in good time—immediately if you insist. You were so unfortunate as to run away with and marry your own sister. I wonder you didn't recognize her by the semblance she bears her father. However that may be, I told her simply the truth—"

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had declared existing between the two young people, or how infinitely preferable the most horrible death would appear to the more-minded girl, rather than life and the burden of sin—unconsciously committed though it were—she must bear through it.

"If he had the slightest hope that the girl could be alive, I don't think we would have found him such a submissive tool. But then, fifteen thousand a year has its charms, even for a heart that's bereaved, and our dear boy is neither blind nor indifferent to the main chance."

"He is too much his mother's son for that," answered Mrs. Redesdale, complacently. "Our machinery is all in motion now, is it not?"

"Pretty much. I have Lynne well in my power already, and he will be out of his depth entirely by the time we are ready for it. He picked up a little last night by plucking that California fool. How will the young lady take it when her faithful swain gives her the cold shoulder, do you think? Plucky enough to face it out, I judge."

"Better than that. Florien don't care a straw for the man in her heart. It's the old romance of first love when she was poor, and that's all I can't understand about it. Walter Lynne is scarcely one to sacrifice himself for dear love's sake. I think it's probable he was amusing himself with her, and the news of her unsuspected fortune 'proved him true.' However that may be, Florien holds to the idea that she must be so because she has plighted her word. She'll not be sorry for the release, mark my words!"

"By Jove! I believe you're right. Look at those two now. Cooing like turtle-doves, and as oblivious of us as if we were across the continent instead of only the length of the room between us."

"Not quite so absorbed nor so oblivious as the colonel's remark suggested, but still very pleasantly engrossed were the young couple. Florien took her place at the piano at his request, and sang the songs of his choosing.

"You must require me in the same manner," she said, smilingly, at last. "I have not forgotten what a rich baritone you are fortunate enough to possess."

"Nor the occasion when you heard it first, may I dare to hope?"

"Seasons may roll,
But the true soul
Burns the same, where'er it goes."

I shall never forget it, not the long, long year I have kept aloof, trying in vain to conquer the wild presumption which sprung up in that first moment of our meeting. You warned me of my folly once, but if it be folly still, I must abide by it. Shall I sing for you—what?"

He was finding a pleasurable excitement in this pursuit to which he had lent himself, and his words, tones and glances were all passionate as though their burden had been truth.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 149.)

A Love-affair.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

It was a summer afternoon. The editor of the *Post* sat in his sanctum, with his heels considerably elevated, and his face wearing a puzzled expression.

Editor Reid was in a brown study. And the cause of his perplexity was before him in the shape of a dainty sheet of white note-paper, scented with violets or roses, he wasn't exactly sure which.

"I'd give a good deal to know who and where this came from," he said, knocking the ashes from his cigar; and taking up the letter again, he read it over for perhaps the twentieth time.

It read:

"Perhaps it's not strictly according to propriety for the editor of this to take the initiative in the matter, but she trusts the recipient will judge her more favorably than the gossiping Mrs. Grundys would, if they were to hear of it. Would it suit the editor of the *Post* to correspond with the writer, or would it not?"

"Such a proceeding would certainly afford much pleasure to the writer of the note. Her object was merely amusement and recreation; possibly some information and benefit might result from it. Who knew?"

"Should it meet with the editor's favor, the correspondence might begin on the 1st of August. She would reach him, I suppose, not much earlier than the month of August, and he would receive her more favorably than the gossiping Mrs. Grundys would, if they were to hear of it. The name given in the letter would do well enough to correspond under, and as nothing but amusement was expected to result from the correspondence, the real name of the writer was no consequence."

Editor Reid, always susceptible to the blandishments of the fair sex, saw something very romantic in this letter. It promised rare sport. There was a charming, albeit a tantalizing mystery about it. Who could have written it? Was it any one he knew?

He asked himself the question over and over again, but the more he questioned himself, the less able he was to answer. He knew of no young lady who would be apt to open a correspondence in such direct violation of the laws of propriety and gentility.

The more he pondered on the matter, the more attraction it had for him, and before he left the office that night, he had written an answer to "Carrie Wynne," and sent it to the post-office with the evening mail.

Editor Reid waited in suspense for the next few days for the reply to his letter.

By-and-by it came. The same white paper, the same delicate scent of violets or roses, and the same handwriting, fine and rather irregular, he could but admit, but rather suggestive of piquancy, he thought.

He read this second epistle through with intense interest. The mystery about the unknown writer invested it with a keen zest for him.

"I'm sure I should like her," he said, returning the sheet to its envelope, after having read it over two or three times very carefully. "She evidently understands herself on a large range of subjects. She can quote poetry, and doesn't get swamped on metaphysics, and seems to understand the events of the times."

From which you may infer that Miss "Carrie Wynne's" letters were a curious mixture of subjects. And they were.

From "gay to grave;" from light, social gossip, to deeper topics of thought. Evidently the writer was rather a peculiar young woman. Sometimes, suddenly, in the midst of a sentimental effusion, a de-

cidely slangy expression would crop out, making him think of the terms in vogue at the university in town where the *Post's* versatile editor had been a student. Perhaps the "fair unknown" was a lady student. He knew many of them, but among them all he knew no one likely to be the author of the epistles which came regularly, once a week, to the editorial sanctum.

He got terribly interested in the correspondence before the winter ended. He sought an interview "at his office on College avenue." He could not get his correspondent to consent to give him that pleasure.

He begged for an interview at any place she might appoint—her residence, her boarding-place, any public resort, anywhere that might be most convenient; he did not care where, if only he could see her whose letters had created such an interest in his young and susceptible heart for their writer. Not that he expressed himself entirely and expressive.

But she was loth to give him a chance to get disenchanted, she wrote. If he should see her, she was the correspondence would lose all its interest for him, and she was

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Two New Romances
BY TWO AUTHORS OF
ENVIALE FAME AND POPULARITY!

We give, in this week's issue, the opening chapters of

CAT AND TIGER;
OR,
THE STAR OF DIAMONDS.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.

AUTHOR OF IRON AND GOLD, RED SCORPION, ETC.

Like most of this author's previous productions this is intensely dramatic in action, strong in character and mysterious in *motif*. It aims to show what a woman will do for love and for hate, and how women can hunt one another through years to retaliate for wrongs done. It is a story of woman against woman, in which men are deeply concerned; full of pathos, tenderness, suffering, tragedy and the compensations of triumph.

To those who admire the strong and severe in action (and the number is indeed large), this romance will be especially acceptable; while to those who admire heroism in act and devotion to a duty, it will be perused, chapter by chapter, with avidity.

The second serial (to commence in our next issue) is

THE BEAUTIFUL FORGER;
OR,
The Adventures of a Young Girl.
A ROMANCE OF THE RANCHES.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLIOTT,

AUTHOR OF MAGDALENE'S MARRIAGE, ETC., ETC.

Introducing the reader to the life in the California ranches, the eminent author tells a story so novel and new that, were it not for the local surroundings and the social lawlessness prevalent, we might imagine it a tale of Old World intrigue, wrong-doing and devotion.

Characters of singular force and distinctiveness as men and women, who have met in the Old World, by a combination of circumstances, find themselves again thrown together in the Land of Gold, to enact a drama of which their early association was the prelude.

The Beautiful Forger is a woman, remarkable in many respects. She is bad and good; she is implacable in her ambition yet terribly true in her loves; she is daring, reckless and unprincipled, but bends like a lily before her own heart-struggles.

The Young Girl involved in the net which others have woven, is the very contrast in character and temper with the fierce Mistress of the Ranch, and the young man who becomes this girl's guardian and champion stands out in the drama like an Ajax.

The Mountain Brigand and the Half-breed Dwarf—two very imps of Satan—find in this young Ajax their foil; and in the two masters of the two ranches the author presents the types of two very noble men, who with the Old Doctor (whose loving Ward the Young Girl is), are instruments in unravelling the Beautiful Forger's subtle schemes.

All is so well knit in plot and incident, and so impressively told, that the serial will be read with immense satisfaction.

Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—We clip, from the *Newspaper Report*, the following item:

Miss Olive Logan (Mrs. Wirt Stiles) will accompany her husband to Europe next spring, to remain abroad an indefinite time. This season, accordingly, will be her last as a public speaker. She proposes to close her career in the lecture field next May, and will not return it.

The lady is, however, not to retire on her laurels. She will devote herself more exclusively to her pen. She now has in hand a new romance of society which promises to be especially piquant, pungent and pertinent. It will be issued early in May by Adams, Victor & Co., New York—publishers of Miss Logan's celebrated volume, "Get These Behind Me, Satan."

The new book by Mary Clemmer Ames, on Alice and Phoebe Cary, is having a large sale, which shows the interest felt in the dead sisters of song. The volume is chatty, gossipy and somewhat on the newspaper "interviewer" order, giving in minute detail matters which, if the sisters were alive, they would certainly shrink from as a breach of sacred confidence. But, such matter is always readable, and is eagerly sought for in these days of sensations—hence, we suppose, the volume. A good edition of the poems of each of the dead poets is greatly wanted. A "Diamond Edition," we are inclined to think, would be very popular. Who will give it?

—The Louisville *Courier-Journal* is severe on the assumption of a leading New York city critic who declares that the hero of the forthcoming great novel must be a journalist. It says:

"The man who says that the hero of the coming American novel will not be a journalist is simply an ass."

That's conclusive. Bottom says it; and our authors who are now canvassing for the coming hero must look into the newspaper offices to find him. Hunt him down and put him in pillory—which means, we suppose, tell the truth about him.

—We hear locally and personally of one of our contributors through the *Prairie City Union*, of Prairie City, Iowa, which, after speaking of Oil Coomes' visit with friends in town, adds:

"Mr. Coomes' life-like delineations of Western men and people, which have rendered him so popular, do not seem to have detracted much from his healthy physique or affability of temper. He informs us that the coming summer he will devote to Western travel, with the view of gathering up facts and data from real life, for the foundation of another story."

That is the reason why so many of our authors succeed beyond the contributors to other popular papers—they know of what they write. That Ralph Ringwood had spent many a month by hunter's camp-fire and on the trail—every word he wrote attests. That Major Max Martine has been an Indian chief and knows the whole North-west "like a book" is very evident. That Joseph E. Badger, Jr., is a perfect familiar with Border life, his unique characterizations make plain. And so the record runs. Almost every person now writing for the SATURDAY JOURNAL exclusively are keen students of men, manners and events, and we expect success from them.

—A correspondent from Monmouth, Ill., writes: "You will accept the thanks of an admirer of the beautiful SATURDAY JOURNAL. I say beautiful, for I am a printer, and consider the JOURNAL faultless in typography, admirable in contents, handsome in its "make up," and consequently the *ne plus ultra* of popular weeklies. Long, long life to it!"—One more fortunate! We are told by a native in the *Washington City Republican* that our young friend, Mr. A. P. Morris, Jr., of Baltimore, and of enviable fame as a writer of poetry and fiction, is to be married March 2d, to Miss Teresa Van Hook of Anacostia, D. C.

Who next? If the example is not contagious it ought to be. Why not? If the theory of "Natural Selection" is to be accepted why not the practice also? Our contributors may consider the vast audience of SATURDAY JOURNAL readers as smiling upon the happy occasion.

A STRING OF PEARLS.

So many "flowers of poesy" are blown in at our editorial window that we often regret our columns are unable to catch and hold them all. This world is so eminently "practical" that but a small amount of poetry is permissible in the popular journal. In some papers, of the more *critical* cast, the poet is almost altogether excluded, which is, to us, a very questionable course to pursue. Poetry is not meat, nor drink, nor money, that is very true, but it is beauty and fragrance—the aroma of sweet dreams and the grace of sweet thoughts; and the journalist who tosses the poet's offering aside would do the same to any thing not practical or useful.

We always give a reasonable space to our poets, and many of the poems used have seemed to us well worthy of the place conceded them. But, as said above, for only a small portion of those offered can we find room, and have, necessarily, to return many that we would gladly put in type.

Of those in hand which thus far have failed of a hearing, we select some of the briefer compositions that our readers will, we are sure, welcome.

From S. V. S. we have this touching and beautifully expressed spiritual:

AN UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY.

Somewhere, they say, beyond the sea,

There is an unknown land,

That waits for you, and waits for me,

That unseen, unknown strand,

Let's seek it! In some fairy bark,

With wings of morning air,

We'll cross the waters dark,

And some day anchor there.

We'll anchor in the golden bay,

And, oh, what perfect peace,

In that country far away,

All care and sorrows cease!

So come with me! The tide is in;

Its ebb shall bear us out,

Forever from the shores of sin

To solve each vague, dim doubt.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

When love subdues the human heart,

And stirs the conqueror's fire,

We find that Fair youth bore a part,

Many a subtle snare;

Or He had not so quickly won

The fortress of the soul;

Using reason's lofty throne,

And a stately scroll.

Its portals gilded by reserve,

Suspicion and alarm,

Had else been potent to preserve

The citadel from harm;

But friendship with her winning smiles,

Binds the great mankind;

Admit me, good by your wiles,

While Love slipped in behind.

When once within, the haughty god

Monopolized the whole;

O'er sacred relies heedless trod—

In bonds that held the soul,

And when His love depart again,

Attendant Friendship nears, society

To cover his retreat, and stain

The ruin with her tears.

H. A. Francis gives us this forcible sonnet:

WITNESSED BY ONE.

Just on the point of being sold,

Sheltered, perhaps, from mortal sight,

With all nature still around you,

Masked beneath the shroud of night;

There's an eye that's ever watchful;

There's an ear that's always hears;

There's a tongue that always whispers;

Words that, to the deaf, are noise;

Sound as sounds the roar of thunder;

Rumbling through the clouded sky;

'Tis the voice of God Almighty,

O'er all creation 'tis His eye.

All-pervading, ever watchful;

While His ear hears every cry.

From over the sea comes this fine tribute to our beloved land and institutions:

THE LAND OF THE FREE.

Suggested by the Grand Institutions of America.

BY A. C. MELVILLE.

America! the land of light,

The refuge of the slaves,

Where people come from homes of night

Across the ocean-wave.

America! the Celt's last hope—

Green Erin's noble child—

Who leaves a father's roof to cope

With the world's Westward wild.

America! the land of homes,

Who comes from "fatherland,"

And breaks the billowy ocean foam

That beats upon thy strand.

America! 'tis England's slave

At last begins to see,

Thine to escape a pauper's grave,

For the world's last free,

America! all turn to you,

Bright beacon-light to man,

Oh may thy sons be ever true,

And march in freedom's van.

A contributor, who evidently don't like the critics, thus fires off his Sharpe's rifle of anger and sarcasm at the "petty public judge."

SONNET TO CRITICISM.

BY MALCOLM TAYLOR, JR.

"Scriptis quidem fata, sed sequitur."—SENeca.

This petty public judge, who fails to find

Divine defects, doth give a gentle blind,

To places, and with eye so erratic blind,

Do mountain faults of molchill errors make;

Then scan'st thou venturous verse of youthful bard,

That in the state of youth, thou may'st indict

For dead, or dead, or maimed, and injured,

His mind's first-born to failure's crushing fate.

In vain to tame the fiery steed;

My pet Pegasus, though thy lash beate,

Or curb thy relv. rule, then can't let lead

Him in the lanes of law, for loth to yield.

He will dash wild and free o'er fancy's field.

Foolscap Papers.

My New Insurance Company.

I HAVE started a new Fire and Life Insurance Company on the following plan and specifications:

No risk will be taken on any building that has a Mansard roof, unless it is kept in the cellar.

Persons having goods consumed by fire will receive an order on the consumer for the goods.

No risks taken on any kind of guns except the kind that misses fire, and none taken on newspaper offices which publish inflammatory articles.

If an insured building burns down, the money will be paid up; but if it burns up, the money will be paid down, or a good excuse will be given.

No stoves allowed inside of any insured house—they must be kept outside.

For convenience, the insurance will expire just before the fire breaks out.

Risks on coal like the last load I got taken at exceeding low rates.

If our agents don't wait on you with enough persistence, and show much back-wardness, please call the attention of the president to the fact.

St. Anthony's fire, fire away, fire in the mountains, camp fire, and the fire which you get up on a frosty morning to make provision against at low rates.

Persons of a combustible nature, who are likely to fire up and burn down, taken at the same rates as other buildings.

Persons that break out must be arrested and put back.

SATURDAY JOURNAL.

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A FEBRUARY LETTER.

To Miss Disdain.

By TOM GOULD.

Was it by Providence designed? Or did some elf, supremely kind, To move this recreant hand of mine, To pen for this my valentine?

Strange I shall be, odd the space In penning lines to thy sweet face. I ne'er was versed in poets' lays, Nor schooled to sing a woman's praise, Yet artful Cupid seems to sway, For all my rhymes will go your way!

Ere I dare to seek my slumbers, Let me dedicate these numbers, Embodiment of artless grace, Matchless form, and—honey face.

So it is! That's not what Doth so attract? you ask. Grant me the boon, I'll tell thee soon, Nor deem it such a task.

I love the trees, I love the breeze, That gambols over the meadow. I love the dell— Its solemn spell Of glimmering light and shadow.

I love each brook And sandy bays, The broad lands unconfined. When winter blists, My fancy casts Some pleasure on the wind.

The stars above: I dearly love them, To see them twinkle so, With mellow light, Throughout the night— And God had told them to.

My loves in store I can not score; On some points I'm a sinner. I'd rather vex The gentle sex Than sacrifice my girler.

Yet, Miss Disdain, To see a point of duty, You would be fair, If your back hair Seemed not a borrowed beauty.

But, oh, your eyes! When fancy tries To match them with the stars That when spied a glow Both faint now That fancy paints old scars.

Your teeth—I vow I dare not now Say aught, lest I should blunder; I ask of you— "Pray, which are new, The upper or the under?"

But then, your cheek A warmth doth speak, I vow I hold thy Pygmalion Yet I'm not sure That that is pure.

Nature, and not vermillion. But let me pray, At once essay To praise your speech and manners— But oh, slack! I do not know If friend or foe Is written on your banners.

Oh, gods of love And sprites above! If aught I say, 'tis railing. Perhaps I might Come to you, And then, 'tis my failing.

I feel I must never trust This rambling pen of mine; In this strange life's Eventful strifes, May happy hours be thine.

Cat and Tiger: OR, THE STAR OF DIAMONDS.

A ROMANCE OF LOVE AND MYSTERY.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.
AUTHOR OF "IRON AND GOLD," "RED SCORPION,"
"PEARL OF PEARLS," "HECULES, THE HUNCH-
BACK," "FLAMING TALISMAN," "BLACK
CRESCENT," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRESENCE OF THE SHADOW.

A STORMY night in the city of Philadelphia.

Vivid lightning darted across the black skies, and loud thunders pealed in the throat of the hurtling wind.

The flood-gates of heaven seemed opened on the earth, and the streets were desolated in the fierce hissing of the rain torrents.

We enter a house of imposing architecture, situated on Walnut street near—

Evidence of wealth glittered on every hand; and the brilliant jets of the chandelier hid, from those within, the fire-tongues of electric fluid.

In the parlor, walking slowly to and fro, with head hung, and brow slightly darkened by a frown, was a woman of transcendent loveliness, attired in costly raiment and weighted with jewels.

She was excited by thoughts that just then trained through her mind; anon she would pause, fold her bare, spotless arms and pat impatiently on the smooth skin with her gemmed fingers. Her red lips were tightly compressed; her large eyes—black as midnight, lustering as diamonds, and shaded by long, silken lashes—sparkled with unwonted brilliancy, and her bosom rose and fell with short respirations.

In the doorway stood another female—a servant. Her face was white, her eyes staring; she watched the movements of her mistress in silence.

The presence of the latter was not known till presently the beauty caught sight of a white skirt, and she faced the girl angrily.

"Well, what are you doing there?" she demanded.

"Nothing, madame."

"Nothing! Then begone!"

"But, madame—" "To your room! Do you not see that I am troubled? I would be alone. Begone, I say."

"But, madame, hear me—"

"Hear you?"

"I dare not retire. Oh, madame!"—casting a quick, fearful glance along the entry, and stepping into the parlor—"I have been terribly frightened. I can not retire."

"Ah! frightened?"

"Yes—I am weak, sick; I could not go to my room now; I—"

"You have seen something?" interrupted her mistress, inquiringly.

The girl looked again toward the hall, and drew further from the door.

"I say you have seen something," reiterated the beauty, advancing and grasping the wrist of her servant.

"Oh, madame! I feel that there is some fearful mystery working here. Yes, I have seen something—but, don't look at me that way! You seem mad, crazed—"

"Mad or not, I am myself, Helene Percy,"

your mistress, and I command you to speak. Tell me what you have seen?"

"A spirit of some kind, a frightful shape that has iced the blood in my veins," she answered, shuddering.

"A spirit! Ha! ha!—yes; go on. Go on, Eloise—you have seen a spirit! I knew that!"

"I knew it, madame!"

"Did I not say so? Now, what did it look like?"

"One color of green, madame, from head to foot, with gleaming eyes, and a voice that laughed at me. It was like a maniac's scream."

"Yes—yes, a laugh like the screech of a maniac! I heard that, too. But, its face, Eloise—Tell me—you saw its face?"

"Madame, it had none."

"Yes—it had none; so you did not see it. This thing without a face, yet with eyes, with voice—what is it? Where did you meet it?"

"On the stairs leading to the kitchen," with a shiver.

"Yes, on the stairs leading to the kitchen. What more?"

"It came upon me suddenly, madame—"

"Yes—suddenly—as it always does—this shadow of green, this demon shape without a face, yet with eyes, and a voice, and—but I am waiting. Why do you not go on? I know more. You saw it on the kitchen stairs—what then?"

"Then, when it laughed so horribly in my ears, it fled toward the kitchen, madame."

"And vanished?"

"Yes, it disappeared."

"Through the wall!—up the chimney!—under the floor!—vanished in air! Am I not right?"

"I could not tell, madame; as soon as I could find strength, I ran hither."

A deep silence ensued.

Helene Percy was thinking. The girl, keeping close to her, still trembled, still glanced uneasily into the dark shadows that filled the hall without.

"Eloise."

"Yes, madame."

"This thing has followed me now for fifteen years."

"Fifteen years!" repeated the girl, in surprise.

"I said fifteen years. This shape of green, with staring eyes and strange laugh, yet faceless, has hovered nigh me, wherever I have been—dogging in my path, terrifying me by its hidden significance. It confronts me only in the night. I have met it in the street at my door; it has come to my bedside, to break my slumbers; it has, sometimes, been at my heels when I ascend or descend the stairs. Who or what is it, I know not. But I hate it!"

"It is a dread phantom, madame."

"Not so, for it has the voice of a human. It has a hard grip, too; I have felt it—once at my throat, as if it meant to choke me. Ugh!" and with a convulsive tremor she resumed her restless striding over the soft carpet.

The maid watched her, wondering why this almost unearthly shadow had followed her mistress for fifteen years. What had Helene Percy done in the past that she should be cursed by the presence of so singular an apparition?

As if she divined the thoughts of the girl, Helene wheeled suddenly and went up to her.

"Eloise!"—very slowly, "I want you to believe me when I say I have never been guilty of any thing to warrant this curse of hauntings. My sleep is broken at night, my peace of mind is disturbed when awake. Why it should be so, I can not tell you. At one time I felt as if I should die, so great was the tax on my nerves. But, I lived through; and now, I am half-resigned to what is a feature to be borne in my existence." Then abruptly: "do you fear it?"

"Fear it?"

"Yes. Would you leave my service through horror of having to encounter it continually?"

"Do you fear it, madame?" asked the girl, after a moment.

"You shall see," was reply, while the dark orb flashed anew. "I am going to discover if I can, what this goblin is."

"And?"

"And then rid myself of it. Will you aid me?"

"Aid you? I?"

"Come with me to the cellar."

"Madame!"

"To the cellar. It is a human being, and it is a woman. We are two women. We can match it, should we meet it. Come."

"But, madame, the danger—"

"Pah! what danger? For fifteen years I have been a prey to its ghostly habits—now I am determined to fathom the mystery. I have noticed that it always disappears toward the cellar. Let us go to the cellar. Come."

Helene, nervously herself to carry out her resolution to solve the mystery, and clutching her jeweled fist to strike in case they met the object, stepped out into the entry.

Instantly she recoiled, and simultaneously a loud, strange laugh echoed through the house, penetrating their ears with cutting sharpness.

"See, Eloise! it goes again toward the kitchen."

"I see, madame."

"Get the lamp from the bracket on the first landing. Be quick. We will follow it closely."

Eloise went for the lamp; though it was evident she had no heart in the determination expressed by her mistress.

When the lamp was lighted, Helene led the way. Eloise followed, timidly.

They entered, and glanced searchingly around.

It was a damp and dismal place. Spider-webs hung thick from the moldy joists, and the flame of the wick formed spectral shades in the niches and round numerous boxes.

All was still and ominous; no sight save the startled rat that glided noiselessly into its hole at their approach, no sound but the faint patter and wash of the rain and rumbling of the thunder.

"Madame," whispered the girl, "let us go back. There is nothing here."

"Pah! you are superstitious," exclaimed Helene, still casting about the tomb-like cellar, and waving the light above her head.

"Perhaps it is superstition, madame; but tell me what you have seen?"

"A spirit of some kind, a frightful shape that has iced the blood in my veins," she answered, shuddering.

"Ha!—do you hear that?"

A terrific peal of thunder shook the house to its foundations.

Suddenly Helene bent forward, and gazed fixedly on a small soot-heap that had been thrown there the day before. Beyond the soot was an old barrel, and between the soot and the barrel she divined an eager scrutiny.

Eloise saw that she had discovered something.

"What is it, madame?"

"Do you not see? Look, Eloise: a footprint—two footprints."

"Yes."

"See how small. The foot of a woman—the foot of the shadow."

"Yes."

"The shape of green is underneath that barrel. We have found its hiding-place. At it, now!"

Helene advanced quickly and grasped the barrel by its head.

But the maid drew further away, as if dreading the result of their attempt to discover the identity of the Green Shadow.

"Now then!"

Helene overturned the barrel, sending it whirling across the earth floor, and displaying a strength in her round, white wrist that seemed incredible.

But no phantom, nor aught else, rewarded the act. Instead, there was exposed to view a square aperture in the stone foundation, of at least, two feet in diameter.

And over this stooped and held the light, while Eloise stared.

In the same moment, an unexpected sound startled them—the clang of the door-gong. The noise reverberated harshly, and was followed by another crash of thunder.

"The door!" Helene exclaimed, breathlessly, and the girl repeated after her, echoing.

"Who can it be? Who would come here in such a storm?"

"I will see, madame."

Glad to escape from the gloomy cellar, she made haste to answer the summons.

The comer was impatient, for ere she reached the head of the stairs the bell sounded again.

Helene heard the front door open and shut; then a step—the step of a man—who, she knew, was entering the parlor.

Presently Eloise returned.

"Who is it?"

"A gentleman to see you, madame."

"A gentleman?"

"Yes."

"What can he want?—that he should come through this storm, and at such an hour?"

"It is near midnight."

"That I can not say; but—"

"Do you know who he is?" interrupted Helene, in wonder.

"I do not know him, madame; but here is his card."

"Ah! his card."

Glancing at the card, she let it fall, and stared blankly.

"Cortez Mendoza!" burst from her lips, in a gash of astonishment—the name that was upon the card.

"And he is now up-stairs?—comes to see me?" as if in doubt.

"Yes, madame."

Recovering from her surprise, she held

most of my race. But what is this Green Shadow? What means it? There must be one, act in the life of Cortez Mendoza that Farak does not know of—an act to bring upon him some deep curse, with a burning brain to rob him of many a night's repose. And what has *Carlina Mendoza* to do with it? Who is *Carlina Mendoza*, that mention of her name should make a tiger of my master, Cortez Mendoza, and set him to foaming at the mouth with passion?"

He read and re-read the note, continuing his soliloquy, and wondering what it was Cortez Mendoza had done, in the past, that he should be haunted, that he should receive such missives—for this was not the first time the Spaniard had received a note written in green ink; but, for fifteen years, they had occurred at regular intervals, and at various places in the United States, their contents being pretty much the same.

But it would appear that Cortez had attempted to elude these hidden enemies lately, and the letter in familiar ink was to warn him of the failure of his plan. What that plan was will be developed, with other important features, during the progress of our work.

We follow Cortez Mendoza.

He had no sooner reached the hallway, near the door of the hotel, than he paused short, and exclaimed:

"Malediction! look I!"

For directly in front of him was the small man who wore a cap, who had first delivered the note to Farak, and afterward stared at Cortez as the latter sat sucking his punch at the restaurant.

As soon as he saw the Spaniard had noticed him, the mysterious individual wheeled about and vanished.

Cortez dashed after him, venting an oath; but the object of his pursuit escaped him.

"Caramba!" he growled. "If I once get him in my grip, I shall tear him to pieces! In New Orleans I was watched by a man—a very tall man; now I am dogged by a very small man, thin, with gray eyes, and—malediction!—who wears a cap. I must get rid of the small one as I did of the large one. Let me catch him once! Ho, there! driver? 47—where are you?"

"Here, sit; 47."

The cab which Farak had secured was speeding away westward from the Girard House, and Cortez Mendoza sat inside the vehicle, his face set in a sinister expression, which the continuous lightning-glare disclosed.

The rain poured like a great torrent on the streets; the war of the elements seemed gathering fresher force each moment.

But the cab rolled on through it all; for Cortez had agreed on a liberal fee to tempt the driver into a hazardous service that defied the bellowing gale.

Dismissing the cabman at the residence of Helene Cercy, Cortez rang the bell and stood close inside the door-frame, out of the drenching rain.

"This storm will soon pass over," he thought aloud, "else I would pay that rascal of a cabman fifty dollars to come back after me. Malediction! have they gone to sleep here? They shall let me in, if I must break the door down!"

"Clang! clang!" sounded the gong-bell, as he gave the knob another wrenching jerk.

Being shown into the parlor, he seated himself and took a survey of his surroundings—twirling his mustache, and darting glances here and there, while he grinned forebodingly.

When Helene entered, he did not rise. He twisted and dragged the harder on the ends of his long mustache, alternately with one hand; he contemplated her steadily, smiling grimly—a keen look, and a sardonic expression in his face; then crossed his limbs and swung one foot slowly inward and outward.

Helene's bright eyes flashed back his gaze; and it was plain that his presence was distasteful to her, for her cheeks were crimsoned, and her pearly teeth were clinched, as if to keep back an outburst of passion and resentment that was rising to her lips.

"Cortez Mendoza," she said, pausing with the utterance of the name.

"Yes, it is Cortez Mendoza," with a spasmodic jerk of the swinging foot. "Yes," he added, the grin broadening, "it is Cortez Mendoza, come, after fifteen years, through fire, and—malediction!—with the scar of the assassin's knife on his bosom, to get the answer you promised. Your answer, Madame Helene Cercy."

Helene was breathing hard.

(To be continued.)

Just to Please Grandpa!

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"I CAN'T do it, grandpa, and there isn't the least bit of use talking to me so much about it. I expect I am very naughty, but, dear old grandpa, I won't do it."

Nina Elvin put her bare arms around grandpa Ediston's neck and saucily whispered in his ear; and then the old gentleman frowned at what she said, and removed her clinging arms.

"And why won't you do it? Just tell me, if you can, what there is so terribly objectionable in what I have proposed?"

"Oh, grandpa, can't you see how distressing it would be to me to be obliged to meet Ernest Ediston, and 'both of us' be thinking all the time—so that's the one I'm to marry, it is, will she, will she?" Oh, grandpa! I wouldn't do it for the world!"

A charmingly indignant flush began to redden on Nina's cheek, so round and fair, and in her big brown eyes gathered a warning gleam, that made her so like the Elvins, everybody said.

And she had inherited the two specialties that marked the Elvins—a willfulness that people generally did not particularly care to arouse, and a peculiarly charming style of manners, a royally condescending way, added to a sweet, frank merriment that made her a universal favorite, from grandpa Ediston down.

And she was prime favorite, too, with him, if he did pretty often come off *hors du combat* in a wordy encounter with pretty, willful Nina—a result that seemed imminent just at present.

And all on account of Ernest Ediston and Nina Elvin—these two second cousins whom grandpa Ediston was determined to have married, and whom—hereby hangs the tale—stubborn Nina was more determined should not be married.

"The idea!" she began, as she eared the massive waves of his white hair, and still in her tones lurked a biting sarcasm.

she knew he must understand and appreciate; "why, grandpa, can it be possible you wish to force me upon a man I never have seen, of whose tastes and habits I am in total ignorance?" Why, it seems to me very far beneath the dignity of an Ediston or an Elvin to attempt to take their children, like goods, to market."

Mr. Ediston winced, then bit his lip, half-angrily—with that certain kind of temper people have a habit of feeling when they are convinced against their will.

"This is all nonsense, Nina, sheer nonsense! all mawkish sentiment! I know that my grandson, Ernest, is a thorough gentleman, a scholar, possessed of ample means, a true Ediston in looks, manners, life, besides being five years older than you, and disposed to favor my plans. What more could you, or any sensible girl, want?"

He looked quite fiercely at Nina, who smiled away the snap in his eyes.

"Possibly less would answer, my dear grandpa, only I intend to select my own husband. Now—don't be vexed—now, I am going to pack my trunk and go away to—well, somewhere on a visit."

"Simply because Ernest Ediston is coming for fortnight's visit here?" and the old gentleman's voice waxed loud and wrath.

"Exactly. You'll kiss me good-by?"

"Never—neither good-by or h'de do—if you deliberately upset my plans so—unless you come back Ernest's betrothed?"

Nina's laugh rung out, loud and sweet; then a serious look came over her face, that grew to actual pain.

"Oh, grandpa! you don't mean that?"

"Just that, you willful Elvin, you!"

Her scarlet lips quivered the merest trifle; and then came that brave light in her brown eyes.

"Very well. Good-by, grandpa. I am going to sister Amy's."

Ernest—so you're off? Well, I wish you God-speed!"

"And success?"

Ernest Ediston looked up from the portmanteau he had just locked, and laughed as he swung it over his shoulder.

"If you desire to succeed, I hope you will, of course. What did you say her name was?"

"You rogue! When did I ever mention her name to you? But, seriously, I am not so anxious to 'succeed.' The truth is, I am going to please grandfather more than any thing else."

Ernest lit his cigar, adjusted his traveling-cap over his short hair, and sauntered toward the door.

Tell Lou I may be home in a day, or a month, will you, Bert?" I am going down to cousin Amy's for a visit, anyhow. Good-by." And Ernest started off to meet, perforce, his fate.

"He's handsome as a prince, isn't he?"

And Nina Elvin's eyes sparkled as she looked across the room to see what sister Amy would say. And sister Amy's mouth twitched a little, then smiled a little before she answered.

"Who?—you! you mean the young friend of husband's, who came last night—Mr. Ernest? Yes, I do think he's the finest-looking man I ever saw, always excepting, of course, our cousin Ediston."

A frown puckered up Nina's forehead.

"For pity's sake don't ever mention his name again. I prefer to discuss this visitor of ours; I only am sorry his name happens to be Ernest." But on Nina's cheek a tiny suggestive blush was spreading as she thought how she had dreamed of Mr. Ernest all the night before. Nina wondered if he knew what her name was, and how it would sound from him, for the way in which sister Amy had introduced her—simply "my sister" left Mr. Ernest no opportunity of more than bowing, with a very admiring glance from his eyes. And Mr. Ernest himself? That very night at the table he declared himself quite plainly when Mr. Coville urged him to promise them a long visit.

"Well, Gus," he returned, laughingly, "I will confess I want to remain rather than go on the errand I have in view. Can you imagine how I must feel, thinking that Miss Nina Elvin is waiting for me at grandfather's house, to come and ask her to marry me?"

Helene was breathing hard.

(To be continued.)

The Rock Rider:

OR,
THE SPIRIT OF THE SIERRA.

A TALE OF THE THREE PARKS.

BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER.

AUTHOR OF "THE RED RAJAH," "THE KNIGHTS OF THE BUBBLES," "DOUBLE-DEATH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

IN THE SIERRA.

The gaunt, somber figure of the Rock Rider, on his tall mule, stood like the genius of the place at the summit of a sharp crag, overlooking one of the loftiest passes in the sierra, the heated air trembling around him as from a furnace. He was watching with his eagle eye the movements of a party of Indians in the pass below him, who advanced slowly, examining the rocks as if tracking some one; and on the point of his lance was the fierce, grim-looking head of the Cheyenne chief, Keche-ah-que-kono.

As he looked down, his face lighted with exultation, and he muttered:

"Keep on, red servants of the evil one, and see how soon ye shall run into the snare that is laid for you! The Indians are set, and the hunters are coming. Ye follow but the lure which shall lead you to your destruction. Have ye no ears to hear the horse-hoofs? Be it so. Whom God would kill he hardens in wickedness. Your end approaches. The enemy and the storm are coming alike."

He turned his mule away, and rode along the edge of the crag at a rapid pace, every now and then pausing to look down. The Indians kept on at their task, and soon he perceived a cleft in the sierra running at right angles to the main pass, toward which they seemed to be tending.

"Whom have they there?" muttered the Rock Rider, to himself, as he trotted on. "Surely they can not have been drawn into such a trap." Yonder ravine came in a sheer precipice, and if any are in it the savages will have them."

A moment more he had arrived in front of the opening of the ravine in question, and uttered a low cry of apprehension as he looked.

As he had said, it was a short cleft in the mountains, ending in sheer precipices, and there at the end of it, in plain sight, were two figures, a man and a woman, both lying on the ground, some distance apart from each other, apparently asleep.

The Rock Rider from his lofty station could see them plainly, but he noticed that a pile of rocks lay in front of them, which would no doubt shield them from the view of any one on the same level.

In front of the rocks, lying down, was a small animal, that his quick glance at once recognized as little Yakop, Brinkerhoff's dog.

"Merciful heavens!" muttered the Rock Rider, to himself, "they never reached the camp!"

He looked back at the Indians and saw that they were still some distance down the pass, slowly but surely advancing. He dismounted from his mule in an instant, and unwrapped from his girdle a long cord, which proved to be nothing but a sling. All his weapons were simple and primitive like himself. Picking up a stone, he placed it in the sling, and cast it with all his might toward the sleeping Brinkerhoff. The distance was nearly a quarter of a mile, but the cliff was high and the slinger strong. The stone dropped with a clatter close to the unconscious German, who started up in a moment.

He saw the Rock Rider when the Indians could not, and when the wild beings waved their arms and pointed down the pass, the Indians saw the shots proceed, and wheeled inward. The ravine was full of shouting, shooting savages, galloping to and fro, yelling, but held at bay by the determination of a single man, Carl Brinkerhoff, who was firing from his shelter right and left into them.

The appearance of Somers and Buford put a new face on matters as they galloped in. The Indians, taken by surprise, wavered and faltered, and the moment was sufficient to bring the dreaded Rock Rider among them.

He came with his sharp lance aimed at the faces of the warriors, who all dodged it in terror, but that lance was too skillfully wielded to miss its aim, and foal after foal was hurled from the saddle.

And then, with a mighty shout of vengeance and triumph, the Indians came sweeping into the dell, and the Indians, hemmed in and overpowered, threw down their arms in all directions.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LAST CHARGE.

The sun was hanging only a little distance above the western peaks of the Sierra, and the air was hot and sultry, ominous of approaching tempests, when Gustave Belcourt emerged from the shelter of the mountains and checked his horse with a word, at the entrance of the South Park.

He had lost his way in the mountains and wandered about, till chance had brought him to the Wolf's Mouth Pass, at whose entrance the contest had taken place two days before.

The little corral of wagons remained just where it had been first hurriedly formed at the close of that attack, not two hundred yards from the mouth of the pass, and in full sight of a glittering pool of water, which only mocked the sufferings of the unhappy soldiers. Twice had they attempted to reach that water in their desperation, only to be driven back to their shelter by the overwhelming numbers of their foes.

Belcourt noticed that, with fiendish ingenuity, the besiegers, while maintaining a close blockade of the camp, carefully left the way open to the tantalizing pool. It seemed as if a rush there might easily succeed, and yet there were hundreds of warriors waiting for just such a movement.

They had concentrated from all parts of the valley into that grim watching circle, and, as he looked, a slow, desultory fire was being kept upon the camp.

He noticed that it was not returned by the soldiers.

The question arose in his mind at once: "Are they out of ammunition, or all dead?"

But they could not be either, or the Indians would have charged, and they seemed to have a great respect for the soldiers still.

"It is lucky they can not see me," he muttered. "They would never think of searching this pass. I wonder whether Somers and Buford got clear through, and where they are now. If they are coming, they must be near by this time. Messieurs, stay where you are but a little longer, and you will get all you want, if the American soldiers are what they used to be when I saw them last year."

Like his friends, Gustave had been an officer of the Union Army, and trusted in its prowess against innumerable Indians.

While he looked, a long shadow swept across the valley, as the sun dipped the edge of his disk behind one of the western peaks of the Sierra.

That shadow seemed to be the signal for the Indians to move. Those who had been standing by their horses instantly mounted, and a furious fusilade was opened on the camp, under cover of which a cloud of warriors swept down on the beleaguered soldiers.

At the head of the storming-party Belcourt recognized the burly form and scarlet plumes of Cochise, who led in person.

The attack was made with a reckless desperation such as Indians seldom exhibited. It seemed as if they knew that the chances of rescue increased every moment they delayed, and were determined to capture the train with its valuable freight before the rescue-party should arrive.

Belcourt watched with intense anxiety the fortunes of the little party, for he knew that on their salvation probably depended his own safety. Nothing had prevented the Indians separating to scour the mountains in search of the fugitives but the superior attractions of the valley.

He saw them dash forward up to the very wagons, firing and yelling, and noticed with dismay that the answering fire was of the feeblest description.

Had he known that the defenders of the corral were to a man fainting with thirst, and so weak as to be unable to fire without a rest, he would not have wondered. And as the attack commenced the sun set.

Already Cochise was hacking away with his saber at a cord which united two of the wagons, and a crowd of dark figures was clustered around the corral, when the young conjuror heard the quick gallop of a horse's feet in the pass behind him. Instinctively he started round, expecting to see an Indian and instead of it beheld the well-known figure of the Rock Rider, dark and fierce-looking in the rapidly gathering shades of night.

He was mounted on his tall mule, which was all covered with foam, and he waved his lance impatiently as he drew

SATURDAY JOURNAL.

A WISH.

BY ALICE LEFFEL.

I counted nine stars. I counted nine stars,
And under those stars I wished, that night,
That I, in the day the morning unbars,
Might be married to a gilded knight.

A meteor flashed athwart the sky:
I watched it with a child's delight:
And I remembered my wish in the time gone by—
By my wish about the golden knight.

I stood down by the garden gate;
By the hedge, in a lane,
And John, he led a canaryate;
My wish had not come to pass!

The Cruise of the Firefly.

It was only a few years ago, but nevertheless, at a period when American yachts were built more for pleasure purposes than for racing, that I was sailing-master of the Firefly, as trim and neat a craft as ever skinned over the bosom of the broad and boisterous Atlantic. She was owned and commanded by Mr. Ethan Van Tassel, a wealthy gentleman who resided at Bay Ridge, and who was passionately devoted to aquatic sports.

"Barker," he said to me one bright August morning, as I received him at the gangway of the Firefly, how long do you think it will take to fit out the yacht for a good, long cruise? I invited a party of ladies and gentlemen to accompany me in her to the West Indies."

I replied that the yacht was so well found, and in such good condition, that the only thing required was to properly provision her, and add two or three extra hands to her crew; and that I thought she would be quite ready in a week to proceed to sea.

My answer decided the date of sailing, and on the 18th of the same month, the pretty Firefly was gliding swiftly through the tree-embossed Narrows, bearing abord as many a party as ever passed a vessel's deck.

I shall only give a brief description of our guests: *Place and names*, Mrs. Vermyle, a lively widow of forty-five, had consented to come for the sake of propriety, as none of the others had assumed the bonds of matrimony.

Miss Fanny Forsyth was a nice-looking, good-tempered young lady of twenty-three; Miss Etta Duval—a blonde, with raven hair, and eyes that flashed like diamonds set in jet; and Miss Rosie Roskell.

I have purposely placed Rosie last on the list, for she merits more notice than any of her sister belles. About eighteen summers had flitted over her fair head, and her charms were just bursting into the full bloom of maturity. Of medium stature, her figure was superbly symmetrical; but it was in her lovely face where most her beauty dwelt. Every feature was finely molded and regular, and her large, melting eyes were as an Italian sky. Her lips were twin rose-buds, her cheeks were the peach-bloom of radiant health, and her golden tresses flung back to the sun his rays as she paced the snow-white deck of our trim yacht.

The gentlemen of the party were: The owner, of course; Franklin Fitzgerald, an exquisite of the first water, ashore, but not a bad amateur sailor; Charlie Charlton, a great muscular fellow, with broad shoulders, a remarkably handsome face, a good temper, and exceedingly bashful. The honorable Algoneron Atherton, heir to an earldom, but notwithstanding, a consummate fool, completed the list.

A fresh, north-easterly breeze carried us swiftly past the light-ship, and, ere the sun sunk beneath the horizon, the land faded from view in our wake. A very little time had elapsed, after we passed the Highlands, before the honorable Algoneron began to feed the fishes with partially-digested *pato de foie gras*, and nanca compelled Miss Forsyth to retire to her berth, and place herself in the hands of her maid for treatment.

The remainder of our passengers stood the pitching and tossing very well, considering that a nasty chopping sea was running. In a few days, however, every one felt as jolly as possible, for the weather was lovely, and even the British ventured to make the assertion that, "After all, yachting was a very pleasant sport, you know?"

When the weather was fine enough, there was dancing on deck—and a moonlight dance on the deck of a roomy yacht is certainly most enjoyable. When it was stormy there was music, singing, cards, and all sorts of fun below stairs. Young ladies and gentlemen naturally assimilate aboard ship; there seems to be something in sea-air that engenders an interchange of affection, and the consequence was that any amount of flirtation was indulged in aboard the Firefly.

Sailors acquire a habit of noticing almost every little thing that occurs aboard their vessel, and, from the position I occupied, I had very many opportunities for gleaning little items, which I concatenated and treasured up in the store-house of my mind.

I soon discovered that both Atherton and Charlton were desperately in love with pretty Rosie Roskell; the honorable Algoneron in his mawkish, lackadaisical fashion, and Charlie in that quiet, reserved way that always indicates a deep, true and pure passion.

Rosie accepted the attentions of the embryo earl with a good grace—for even in Republican America a lordly title has a charm—and I began to fear from little scraps of conversations which reached my ears that Atherton would succeed in winning her for his bride. Charlton must have been of the same opinion, for he changed much in manner, became moody and depressed, and though he would brighten up instantaneously when engaged in a *tete-a-tete* with Miss Roskell, his cheerfulness vanished like a dream when Atherton, with his cool *aplomb*, put in his egotistical ear. I was sure that Rosie liked Charlton, admired him for his many manly attributes; but then the poor fellow had no high-sounding title and only a moderate income. Miss Roskell was wealthy, being an heiress, and that I imagined was one of Charlton's chief reasons for not pressing his suit—he would not be deemed by a censorious world a fortune-hunter.

A considerable amount of familiarity existed between Charlie and myself, for he used to pace the deck with me during night-watches, therefore when I noticed him sitting upon the cabin skylight one night with his head buried in his hands, I did not hesitate to inquire what ailed him.

"Barker," he said, rising and grasping my arm, "I'll tell you what my trouble is, for I know I can confide in you." I've seen a ring to-night upon Miss Roskell's finger which belonged to that puppy Atherton. You can guess the rest. I wish I had not come in the Firefly; I should have saved myself much sorrow."

Since that disastrous voyage I have spent many a pleasant hour in the society of Mr.

lady has accepted Mr. Atherton; but it can't be helped. Guess you'll get over it all right, sir. There are plenty more nice and pretty girls left in the world. If I might advise you—"

"How's the weather going to be, Barker?" interrupted Mr. Van Tassel, who came on deck at that moment. "The barometer is falling fast."

"There's a cloud-bank down to leeward there, sir, that seems to be rising; I'll reef her down if it gets much higher," I replied. Then I went below and consulted our faithful Aneroid.

"On my return to the deck, I found that the cloud-bank had risen several degrees above the horizon, and the stars were twinkling maliciously. I called all hands and directed them to stow the jib and main-top-mast staysail and close reef the fore-sail, mainsail and fore-staysail. This accomplished, I awaited coming events. We were off the Bahamas—Turk's Island, at latitude 21° N., longitude 6° 31' E., bearing W. S. W., distant about ninety miles, according to solar observations taken at noon the preceding day. In this vicinity sudden storms are of frequent occurrence, so I anxiously watched the mass of dark, angry clouds as they rose higher and higher, wailing the stars from view. Soon a gust came down upon us with such velocity that Firefly keeled over until her lee-gunwale was awash, and the lively craft, as she flew up to the wind, started forward like a frightened hare. A lull, another gust, still stronger than the first, and then the clouds opened and poured down upon us a sluicing torrent of chilly rain. The sea rose up in great mountains of foam, whose white caps burst and flew across our deck, blinding us with the saline spray. The yacht rode the waters like a sea-bird; but I, nevertheless, deemed it prudent to stow the fore-sail and let her dodge easily along under her reefed mainsail and fore-staysail. Toward midnight the gale moderated somewhat, but, just after sunrise, the wind veered suddenly, and a gust swept down with such overwhelming force that even the yacht could luff up, or we could ease off the sheets, both her stanch masts snapped like pipe-stems six feet above the deck. All hands turned out without waiting to be called, and we instantly set about clearing the wreck as best we could, for the yacht lay like a log in the trough of the sea, and at every lurch the floating spars—still held by the rigging—would dash like battering rams against the sides of our fragile house. The owner, Charlton and Fitzgerald lent us a hand, the latter forgetting his foolishness and working well in the general cause.

Charlton was particularly active; but the honorable Algoneron came up on deck, looking pale as a ghost, and trembling with terror. He clung tenaciously to the rail of the cabin companion-way, glared in dismay at the scene before him, and then, taking refuge on the staircase, yelled lustily to those below: "The ship's sinking; we'll all be drowned. Oh! why did I ever leave old England?"

"Dry up, you cursed fool—you'll scare the women," shouted old Joe Simmons, the helmsman, who was no respecter of titles.

The next moment I saw Miss Roskell rush past Atherton and stand full upon deck, her golden tresses streaming in the whistling wind as she gazed in amazement around.

"Don't let the ladies come on deck, Charlie," cried my employer, who was busily severing the lanyards of some of the back-stays.

Charlton started aft; but, before he could come within five fathoms of where Miss Roskell stood, a great, green wave breached over the weather-quarter, the dismantled yacht quivered beneath the shock of the bursting water, and the flying spray obscured my vision for an instant. I dashed the brine from my eyes only to see that Rosie's place was vacant, to see her yellow hair stream out upon the seething crest of the billow that had borne her away—to see Charlton spring into the foaming surf.

The waters closed over him, and, as the yacht sunk down in a deep valley, I lost all sight of him for a moment. Snatching a life-buoy from its place, I hurled it as far as my strength would allow in the direction I thought he was. No boat could live in such a sea; the yacht was unmanageable, and I gave poor Rosie and the man who adored her up for lost.

"Pshaw! Don't trouble your head about the drunken brute," answered the settler, lightly, but as he turned away and stepped into the yard, he muttered: "Must be watched. I was in hopes that he would not have remembered, but that lump where my fist landed was enough if nothing else, to recall the circumstance."

The summer passed, and they had seen their drunken guest no more.

But as the leaves began to fall, the settler one day, while returning from hunting on the hills, and passing through a dense piece of timber not far from the house, caught sight of a figure lurking among the bushes, but which quickly disappeared when he advanced toward where it was. The figure was that of an Indian warrior, and Rufe Branson would have sworn that it was the Indian whom he had knocked down and bound the previous summer. The knowledge was not in any way comforting, and hence he did not tell his wife of the discovery.

It would only alarm her, without, perhaps, any good result, simply telling her that he had discovered bear-tracks near by, and that she and the child must stay within, or close to the house, when he was absent.

Several days afterward, Rufe Branson heard his dogs in the timber down by the river, and knowing that they never opened without good cause, he caught up his barking, and hastened to where they were barking. They had struck a fresh bear-trail, and as he arrived in sight, they fairly lifted it, going off in a straight line down the river.

The chase led him several miles, and when, at last, he got his shot that finished Bruin's career, he found that it was three or four o'clock in the afternoon.

Swinging his game to a sapling out of reach of wolf, or cat, he started for home to get the old gray mare and return to fetch it that night.

Taking a near cut, he approached the cabin from the western side, where the timber grew heavy up to within a few rods of the building, and consequently he could not see the clearing or what might be transpiring there until he had passed through the wood.

Thus it was that, when within but a very short distance of his home, he heard a wild, piercing shriek, he could only guess that something terrible must be taking place beyond the screen of bushes and leaves.

Uttering a loud shout, that his presence might the sooner be known, Branson sprang forward with the leaps of a wounded buck, a great fear at his heart, for he had only too clearly recognized in that scream the agonized voice of his wife.

It took but a moment for him to clear the intervening timber and undergrowth.

As he dashed out into the clearing, holding his rifle ready for instant use, he comprehended in one swift glance all that had taken place, and what was further to fear.

Near the end of the cabin facing the cliffs, of which I have spoken, stood the mother, her face pallid as the dead, her arms outstretched, and her staring eyes fixed upon the precipitous heights up which the figure of an Indian warrior was struggling.

I guessed the cause, and threw out a gentle hint to the latter, which he was not slow to take.

"Ah! Barker, old fellow, your eyes are sharp," he said, smiling. "You see, when Rosie and I were overboard, and I thought nothing could save us, I told her how much I loved her, and, by Jove, when she recovered, she was so disgusted with the arrogant cowardice displayed by that right honorable ruff that she returned him his ring and his liberty, and kindly consented to accede to my prayer that she would take me in tow for life."

"I guess the cause, and threw out a gentle hint to the latter, which he was not slow to take."

"Ah! Barker, old fellow, your eyes are sharp," he said, smiling. "You see, when

Mrs. Charlton, and have had the pleasure of witnessing the nuptials of Mr. Franklin Fitzgerald with Miss Fanny Forsyth.

Recollections of the West.

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

WHERE the Kentucky river cuts its way through the mountains, having upon either bank bold, rugged cliffs that lift their summits five hundred and a thousand feet, as the case may be, above the stream, there lived in early times a settler by the name of Rufus Branson, who, with his wife and only child, a charming little girl of some eight or nine years, occupied the rude cabin at the base of a tall precipice a little back from the river.

Although greatly exposed to danger—the Indians at that time being plentiful throughout the region—he managed to live quietly for several years.

The Indians frequently visited the rude home of the hunter, and being always welcome, and provided with such food as might be in the larder, they maintained a friendly attitude.

Especially were they fond of the child, Maggie, and more than one fierce warrior had been seen sitting on the grass in front of the cabin, listening to the childish prattle of the little one, or else engaged in making it some toy or plaything of willow twigs or pliant bark.

In this manner several years had been passed, and Rufe Branson came to feel as secure as though he was within the walls of a frontier fort.

One evening Branson and his wife were seated near the open doorway, when suddenly a shadow fell across the threshold, and the next moment a tall savage, whose skin was of the ordinary white, but whose fine, athletic form was fully displayed by his closely-fitting buck-skin garments, stepped quickly forward a few paces, and firmly planting his left foot in advance, threw up the unusually long and heavy rifle, as though preparing to fire.

"For God's sake, stranger, be careful of my child!" cried Branson, while the agonized mother uttered an audible prayer.

"It is our only chance. I know that Indians," was the quick reply, and the sharp click! click! of the hammer as it was drawn back told that the critical moment had come.

By this time the Indian had nearly reached the summit of the steep. That he was wounded, now became evident, as upon a broad ledge of rock he paused a moment.

This opportunity was seized by the unknown.

Although the savage had taken the precaution to hold the child up in front of him as a shield, covering nearly the whole of his brawny chest, but leaving his head uncovered, the stranger did not hesitate in making the shot.

For one second, as it gained its position, the rifle wavered, and then instantly became as immovable as though held in a vice.

With clasped hands and straining eyes the parents watched that statue-like form upon whose skill so much depended.

Suddenly the sharp report rang out—the white smoke drifted away, and as the vision became clear, they saw the savage loose his hold upon the child, reel wildly his instant, and then pitch forward upon the rocks.

It may be imagined that the father was not long in reaching the place where his child lay, and in a few moments more the little one was in its mother's arms.

"Tell us who you are, that we may know what name to mingle in our prayers," said the mother, as the stranger prepared to depart.

"My name is DANIEL BOONE," he said, and was gone.

the bundle borne in the Indian's arms was the form of their only child, little Maggie.

Firm of heart, and with nerve as steady as the rocks around, the father for a moment actually quailed and cowered under, what his quick sense told him, the deadly peril of his little one.

But he was quick to recover.

The Indian was drawing away; step by step he was increasing the distance, and as he occasionally glanced backward and downward, the parents saw in his hideously-painted countenance the tell-tale purpose that actuated the abductor.

"God aid me!" Branson muttered, as he raised his rifle, glanced through the sights, and touched the trigger.

The Indian started violently at the shot.

He was hit, but not badly, and with a yell of devilish triumph, he pressed upward.

"Too low by a couple of inches," said a low, calm voice at the settler's elbow.

Branson started as though he himself had been shot.

"Where had this man come from? Who

was he?"

Neither had seen him approach.

But there was no time for explanations.

The stranger, a man rather below than above the ordinary height, whose fine, athletic form was fully displayed by his closely-fitting buck-skin garments, stepped quickly forward a few paces, and firmly planting his left foot in advance, threw up the unusually long and heavy rifle, as though preparing to fire.

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THE LIGHTNING-ROD MAN.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

He came to me one summer day,
I thought him rather odd,
His talk it seemed to stretch a mile,
Yet 'twas about a rod.
He had a very pretty tongue,
Is that by little and by none,
And there was thunder in his tones
Which struck me as quite true.
He wished to put them on my house
To save me from the shock
Of lightning, and to keep away
The thieves who'd pick my lock.
He said that he could keep the small-pox off
And purify the air,
And said "I would have a splendid thing
To have one here and there.
At last I said, "Go put them up,"
Convinced that he was right,
And then to town I rode to pass
The next day and the night.
With a pack we got the rods round
Covered with iron bands,
My roof it had as many spires,
Indeed, as old Milan's.
Upon the ridges of the roof
He had put half a score;
On every corner there were two,
And to each chimney four;
The rods were all up and round the house
So thick they were entwined,
They ran across the windows, and
Quite answered for a blind.
I took that wondrous man aside—
Said I, "My earnest friend,
You've got my house all covered o'er;
With rods without an end;
I think you've got them rather thick,
The house is far too small,
I'd better build it larger, so
That it will hold them all;
There won't be any lightning left
The country to supply that
Must half the rods upon that house
Poles of the sky!"
The rods will gather every bolt
There is in Christendom—
Now don't you think I'll be obliged
To advertise for some?"
He leaned against the garden fence
Quite rapt in studious thought;
"To tell the honest truth," said he,
"It seems to me you ought
Just then I supposed it took round,
And what should meet my view,
But two rods on the chicken-coop,
And on the pig-pen two?
I also saw that he had gone
And put one on the pump!
And one on every gateway post,
And one on every chimney!
All round the house put his rods
On every thing in reach,
He'd stuck poles all about the yard,
And put a rod on each.
I killed that fellow then and there
As I would kill a fife;
The verdict of the jury was,
"Murder, to be sure."
I buried him, and lightning rods
Put at his feet and head,
And lightning strikes his grave each day
And makes him still more dead.

Jed Coffin's Revenge.
A TRUE STORY OF 1812.

BY LAUNCE POYNTZ.

WHEN the schooner *Reprisal* sailed out of Boston harbor to cruise against the British, many people thought her owner was mad. Most, even of the sanguine kind, shook their heads, and "guessed Joe Macy would never see *that* money ag'in," meaning the cash invested in the *Reprisal*. And yet Joe Macy had always been lucky in his ventures, so far. An old sealing skipper, he had discovered larger herds, tried out more "ile," and brought home heavier cargoes of skins than any other man from "The Vineyard." What was it made every one shake their heads, when the retired skipper took a sudden dash into business at seventy-six, and bought the *Reprisal*, to be used as a privateer? Simply that Boston harbor was blockaded, and a fleet of the fastest frigates in the British navy was waiting outside to snap up any thing trying to escape.

"What kin a little hooker like that do if a frigate gits her under her lee in heavy weather?" said one wise old sailor of the croaker order. "Why, she ain't no bigger'n a mejun-sized jolly-boat, and it'll take her all day to travel up and down the waves, when 'tother one's a-cuttin' 'em to smash."

Now this was an exaggeration, as the speaker knew. The *Reprisal* measured a hundred and sixty tons, and carried a pair of sticks in her big enough for a corvette. No one knew any thing of her sailing powers, for she was only just built, and by a new man, a youngster in the trade, full of new-fangled notions.

"Plane of flotation, amount of displacement, lines of least resistance! Git out!" said the before mentioned oracle, in reply to a timid explanation from the modest young ship-builder, who had listened to the other's caustic remarks for some time. "Man and boy, I've took the seas for nigh on fifty year, and I never heerd on 'em. I say the hooker's overmasted, and she'll go to eternal smash if it comes on to blow."

The speaker was interrupted by a nasal voice, and turning round, beheld a tall, raw-boned sailor, with a shrewd, Yankee face, and an appearance of great keenness and resolution.

"Say, shipmate," said the individual, "no one's asking you to go to sea in this here barky, which, to my mind's as sweet a little piece o' white-oak and locust as a feller need step on. I ain't axed, your opinion myself, and seein' I'm skipper o' this here, pr'aps you'll take your ugly, Job's-comforter-mug to glower at some one else's craft. Hoy?"

"And who be you?" demanded Growler. "I be Captain Jedediah Coffin, what went into Tripoli with Decatur, if you want to know. So now travel."

And Growler complied with the request, not over-graciously, but the fact was, that the captain's fist looked uncommonly large and bony, and "Jed Coffin" was well known by reputation in Boston as the sailor who had saved Decatur's life at Tripoli, ten years before, by cutting down three Turks single-handed.

And thus it became spread about the town that old Macy had engaged "Sarcey Jed Coffin" to command his schooner, and people said "twas all one—she was bound to be a coffin for some, anyhow.

So thought not Jedediah himself, as he went up to the owner's house to report his vessel fitted out, and take the final orders of the wary old sealer.

"Cap. Macy to hum?" he inquired of the smart girl who opened the door. For answer the girl surveyed his figure somewhat pertly, turned up her nose, and observed:

"What do you want of him, young man? He ain't used to having common sailors come here after him. He's got an office and a book-keeper for sich."

Jed Coffin closed one eye, and expectorated over the area railings before he made answer:

"Is Cap. Macy to hum, Susan Jane, or ain't he, sain't?" said the damsel, shortly.

"Then I guess I'll just walk in and wait for him," said Jed, coolly; and before the girl could interpose an objection, he had thrown his quid into the street, stalked past her without saying a word, and entered the handsome drawing-room.

The maid followed him, aghast, to recall him, but Jed had already "brought to, all standing," as he subsequently expressed it; for before him stood a very beautiful and fashionable young lady, who addressed him as if she had known him all her life.

"This is Captain Coffin, I know, for papa has often described you to me. Tell me truly, do you think that you will be able to take the schooner to sea past the British? Papa says he believes in your ability; but isn't it frightfully risky?"

As she spoke, this gracious divinity waved her hand toward a chair, and sunk down herself on a luxurious couch. Jed Coffin, for the first time in his life, looked awkward, as he obeyed the gesture. His attitude expressed a strong sense of being there on sufferance, as he sat down on the very edge of the chair, under which he dropped his hat, and nervously grasping his knees with his huge brawny hands, answered the young lady's question.

"Yes, Miss, it are risky, but the little hooker'll scrape through if we hev to run gunnel on the hull trip, and she kin do it, tu. That ere schooner, Miss, are a regular sneeze to go, and carries a mainsail like a frigate's courses, she du. We'll git out, Miss, never you fear, and if we don't bring in a few o' them pesky West-Injamen, why you may chaw up Jed Coffin for a darned—"

And the rough sailor pulled up short, for his enthusiasm was being betrayed into language he instinctively felt unsuited to the locality.

Marion Macy smiled. The sailor, with his *way* of talking, was a new experience to her, fresh from a fashionable school. But as the oldest and wisest of sailors is but clay in the hands of the youngest of school-



JED COFFIN'S REVENGE.

girls, the little minx artfully continued the conversation, removing the sailor's bashfulness by degrees, and drawing him on to talk, till Jed Coffin found himself telling her all his past life, with its strong spice of adventurous stories, as freely as if he were spinning yarns in the old forecastle of former years. When Captain Macy entered the room, an hour after, he found the new commander quite at home, while Marion was laughing heartily at one of his dry stories. And then the old sailor pulled up, quite stiffly, for although Jed Coffin was good enough to command the *Reprisal*, and cruise after the prize-money for the old man's benefit, Macy was absurdly jealous of his daughter, and quite determined on her marriage with young Mr. Gerry, of New York, whose father was "one of the signers, you know. No better family."

So Captain Macy chose to fancy that rough Jed Coffin was too presuming with his daughter, and he cut the interview short very ungraciously, giving Coffin his orders before Marion as master to servant, a tone the independent sailor would not have brooked had the captain been younger. As it was, he turned stiff in his own turn, and when the captain intimated to him that on his return from the voyage he could report at the office, "and not here on any account," Jed replied, very quietly:

"You needn't be afeared, Cap; I ain't one to take liberties, when I'm told I ain't welcome, kindly plainer. If I come back at all, maybe what I'll bring won't be above sneakin' at. Good-by, Cap. Good-by, Miss Marion."

And as he was going out, much hurt at his employer's sudden rudeness, Marion ran forward and whispered:

"Don't mind pap'a. He's as cross as a bear, to-day. I'll see you when you come back. So mind you come."

And didn't Miss Marion get a good wigging for that speech? But to all her father's scolding she only replied:

"All right, pap'a. You know what girls are. You've taken the wrong way with me, I can tell you."

And further explanation she would not vouchsafe, till the *Reprisal* was out of the harbor, and under fire of the whole blockading fleet, which was next day.

Then she told her father, to his great amazement:

"Father, if the *Reprisal* goes down, I'll die an old maid."

Among the Alaska rivers are the Atuocooakuchargut, Nocatschigut, Kuyuyuk, Connecoah, Unaachluit and Golsova-Richika, along whose banks live in almost Arcadian bliss the Cuyukanickpukus, Yakutskylitmis, Sakiatksylitmis, Anka-chagamuk, Mekutonecutzocots, and other tribes equally simple and appropriate nomenclatures.

A Decided Mistake.

BY JOHN D. RYAN.

"Now I am in for it," thought Jack Stanley, as he slowly descended the steps of his boarding-house. "Nice fix this, truly—dead broke and turned out. I wonder what good Samaritan will shelter me to-night?"

He buttoned his coat closely around him, for it was a raw, blustering night in November, and with an expression half-rough, half-comical, upon his handsome face, he took his way down the street.

The young gentleman with whose soliloquy our story opens, had but lately arrived in the metropolis, in search of fame and fortune. With a light heart and a lighter purse, he had looked diligently for an opening, but fortune, the changeable dame, would not smile upon him, and he had been unsuccessful.

And now, his landlady's dues not being forthcoming, that uncompromising functionary had given him notice that his company could be dispensed with. In short, she had turned him out.

Fortunately, Jack's was a spirit not easily cast down. Possessing education, health and plenty of energy, he had no fears for the result, and he could not suppress a laugh at the position in which he found himself.

Wandering aimlessly along, he arrived in front of one of the great hotels, and, for want of something better to do, paused at the entrance to watch the gay throngs which kept passing to and fro.

Suddenly a hand was laid upon his arm. Turning around, he confronted a spruce-looking little man, with a yellow face and twinkling black eyes, who exclaimed, hurriedly:

"On time, I see, but you are none too early. Our little affair is all arranged, and—"

"I fear you are mistaken, my friend," interrupted Jack.

"Am I?" returned the little man, with a sly chuckle; "I'll wager you a dozen of wine that it is as I say. Come—we must be moving."

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